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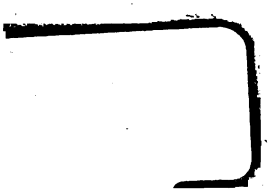

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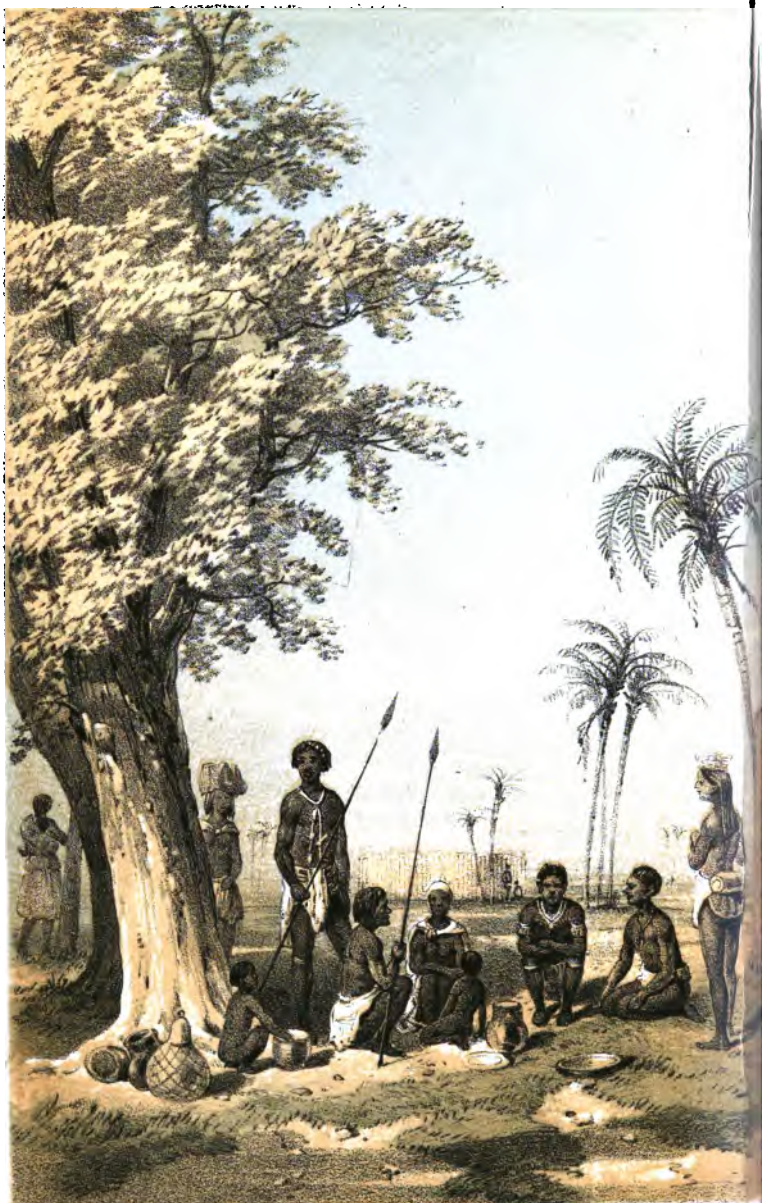

Damaras.

Ovampo.

NATIVE GROUP.

John Murray Albemarle Street, 1853

Africa(South)-Description 1853
(I.C)

THE

NARRATIVE OF AN EXPLORER

IN

TROPICAL SOUTH AFRICA.

BY FRANCIS GALTON, Esq.

WITH COLOURED MAPS, PLATES, AND WOODCUTS.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
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PREFACE.

THE following pages contain the description of a part of Africa hitherto unknown to Europeans, but which has recently been travelled over and explored by the Author. His journey was a tedious and a very anxious one, but happily brought to a close without loss of life or serious accident to any member of his large party, which altogether amounted to nearly forty men.

The result of this excursion has been to fill up that blank in our maps which, lying between the Cape Colony and the western Portuguese settlements, extends to the interior as far as the newly discovered Lake 'Ngami.

The country of the Damaras—warlike, pastoral Blacks—was in the first instance explored; beyond them he found a broad tract, inhabited by aboriginal Hottentots; and, again, to the north of these, the Ovampo, a race of intelligent and kindly negroes, who

are careful agriculturists, and live in a land of great fertility.

On his return southwards, a quick journey was made into the interior, near the line of the southern tropic, until a road, which had recently been travelled from the borders of the Cape Colony to Lake 'Ngami, was reached, and in this way a practicable route between the Lake and the Atlantic was proved to exist.

Few new objects of natural history were either collected or heard of, as the tract in question was for the most part a high barren plateau, that supported but little variety of either animal or vegetable life.

The journey may perhaps produce a useful result, by indicating a very favourable opening to missionary enterprise, namely, among the Ovampo. The writer has no wish to commit himself to extreme views either on this or on kindred subjects, but, if philanthropists continue anxious to promote African civilisation, the remarkable advantages of Ovampo-land, as a leverage ground in these matters, should not be lost sight of. The healthiness of the climate, the position of the country, the intelligence and orderly habits of the natives, their travelling and trading propensities, and, lastly, the ready access which it admits of from a healthy sea-coast, form most cogent

recommendations. In addition to these, though bordering on slave-producing countries, Ovampo-land is itself exempt from that scourge, and there would be one prejudice the less for Christian teachings to encounter.

A traveller who, starting with the same views that the Author did, chose to start from Little Fish Bay, or elsewhere, in Benguela, and explore to the eastwards and southwards, would be likely to make a very successful journey. He would find shooting in abundance, and have opportunities of learning everything about as highly interesting a race of negroes as is probably to be found in the whole of Africa. The Author's fate certainly led him over a great deal of barren country, and many monotonous days were passed; still he cannot regret that he undertook the journey, for, besides the enjoyment of robust health in Africa, habits of self-reliance in rude emergencies were acquired, which are well worth possessing, though an English education hardly tends to promote them.

A question is commonly put to explorers, "Why could you not go further when you had already succeeded in going so far?" and the answer to this is, that several independent circumstances concur in stopping a man after he has been travelling for a certain time and distance. He *must* refit, for his

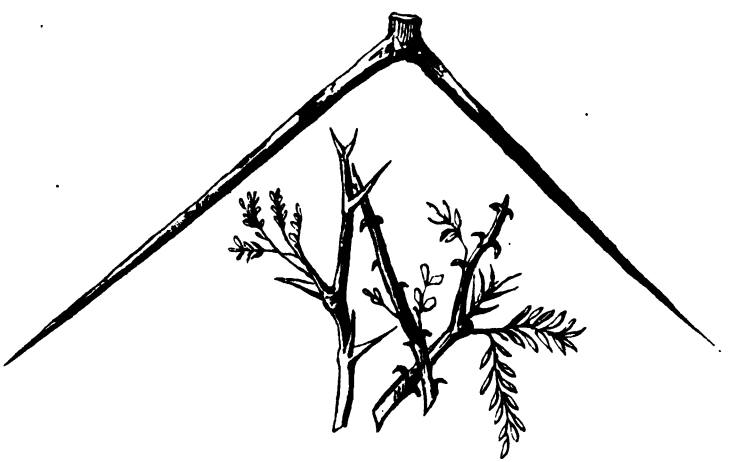
cattle become worn out; his articles of exchange, which are his money, expended; and, indeed, the medium of currency among the people he at last reaches being unknown to him, has of course been unprovided for. His clothes, necessaries, luxuries, all become exhausted, and the *capital* out of which he has to support himself fast disappears. On the other hand, infinite difficulty is found in acquiring the confidence of a strange nation; a new language has to be learnt; native servants refuse, and are unfitted, to accompany their master in countries strange and probably hostile to them, and whom months of joint labours had educated into a kind of sympathy with his cause; and so, when an explorer intends to cross the frontier of a neighbouring tribe, he finds that all his old travelling arrangements are more or less broken up, and that the further progress of the expedition will require nearly as many preparations and as much delay as if it were then about quitting the borders of civilisation. But his energies are reduced, and his means become inadequate to the task, and therefore no alternative is left him but to return while it is still possible for him to do so.

It is therefore not to be expected that any large part of the vast unexplored region before us will yield its secrets to a single traveller, but, rather, that they will become known step by step through various

successive discoveries; and as the experience of nearly a century corroborates these views, it is probable that for years to come there will still remain ample room in Africa for men inclined for adventure to carry out in them, if nowhere else, the *métier* of explorers.

FRANCIS GALTON.

8, St. James's Place,
April 27th, 1853.



The four Mimosas that, to the exclusion of nearly every other tree or bush, form the vegetation of Damara-land.

DATES OF MY JOURNEYINGS.

1850	August	Sail from Cape Town and land at Walfisch Bay.
	September	Travel with cart and mules to Otjimbinguè.
	October } November }	Buy oxen and send them down to fetch the waggons, while I stay at Otjimbinguè and at Barmen.
	December	Make an excursion on ride-oxen to Erongo.
1851	January	Take waggons to Schmelen's Hope, and ride thence to beyond Rehoboth.
	February	Interviews at Schmelen's Hope; adjacent country is explored.
	March	Travel with the waggons to the northward.
	April	Pass Omanbondè—reach Okamabuti—a waggon breaks down.
	May	Meet the Ovampo caravan, and return with them on ride-oxen to Ondonga.
	June	Stay a fortnight at Nangoro's, then go back to Okamabuti.
	July	Return southwards with the waggons by the Omoramba.
	August	Reach Barmen and go on to Jonker's.
	September	Take waggon to Elephant Fountain, ride thence on ox-back to Okomavaka.
	October	Cross plain to 'Tounobis; stay a week and return.
	November	Travel with waggons down towards the coast.
	December	Reach Walfisch Bay and wait for the ship.

LATITUDES AND LONGITUDES OF PRINCIPAL POINTS.*

	South Latitude.	East Longitude.
Schmelen's Hope	22° 0′	16° 56′
Okamabuti	19° 31′	18° 20′
Nangoro's Werft in Ondonga	17° 59′	16° 14′
Elephant Fountain	22° 27′	18° 59′
'Tounobis (or Otchombindè)	21° 55′	21° 55′

* See p. 161, vol. xxii., "Journal of Royal Geographical Society," for details of the calculations and for further latitudes.

ITINERARY OF MY PRINCIPAL ROUTES.

From WALFISCH BAY to NANGORO'S . . . 719 English Miles.
" " TOUNOBIS . . 518 "

The hours given are those of actual travelling, *exclusive of all delays*. I allow 2½ English miles for each hour; but, reckoning *as the crow flies* from point to point, 2 *geographical* miles will be found to be very near the truth.

Hours.	WALFISCH BAY TO BARMEN. 207 Miles.
	From Walfisch Bay to—
1	Sand Fountain.
5	Scheppmansdorf.
16	Obsop Gorge. [No W.]
9	Davieep Gorge.
13	Mouth of Tsobis R. [W.]
7	Tsobis.
7¾	Kurrikoop. [No W.]
2	Otjimbinguè.
3½	In river bed.
5	Okandu.
2	Ondjiadjikennè.
4	Etamondjua.
4	Reedy Fountain.
3½	Barmen.
82¾	or 207 miles.

Hours.	BARMEN TO OMANBONDÈ. 219 Miles.
	From Barmen to—
8	Schmelen's Hope.
1¾	Okandu.
5¼	Okamabondè,
4½	Kutjiamakompè.
6½	Okanjoè. [No W.]
6¼	Omoramba R. [No W.]
2½	Okatumba.
2½	Otjikururumè.
2½	Ontekeremba.
5	Wells.
3	Ozukaro.
5¼	Ombarombonga.
8¾	Wells. [No W.]
20	Okavarè (or Omanbondè). [W.]
91¾	or 228 miles.

Hours.	BARMEN TO TOUNOBIS. 310 Miles.
	From Barmen to—
3	Foot of first hills.
11½	Katjimahas old kraal. [W.]
4	Eikhams.
12½	Wells on Quiseep R. [W.]
5	Bend of Quiseep R.
18½	Noosop R. [No W.]
2½	Kurrikoop.
1¾	Water in Noosop R.
13	Elephant Fountain. [No W.]
11½	Twas. [No W.]
9	Okaietoura. [W.]
6½	Okanyindu. [W.]
5½	Okomavaka.
20½	'Tounobis. [No W.]
124½	or 311 miles.

Hours.	OMANBONDÈ TO NANGORO'S. 284 Miles.
	From Omanbondè to—
10	Okatjokeama, S. Vley. [W.]
4¾	Okapukua.
4¼	Otjamunè.
3¼	Okamabuti.
4	Namboshua.
6	Ootui.
8	Otchikango. [No W.]
12	Otchikoto. [No W.]
9½	Otjando. [No W.]
14½	Omutchamatunda. [No W.]
10½	Wells in Flat. [No W. for 9½ hrs.]
21	Vleys, 2 hours in Ondonga. [No W.]
6	Nangoro's Werft.
113½	or 284 miles.

The letters in brackets affixed to those stages which exceed 5 hours, mean as follows:—[W.] that there is water sufficient in quantity for cattle on the road in one or more places, [No W.] that there is not.

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TROPICAL SOUTH AFRICA.

CHAPTER I.

Determine to travel in Africa.—Motives for the journey.—Preparations.—Stock in Trade.—An Emigrant Ship.—Arrival at Cape Town.—Dangers of the Road.—Change of Route.—Determine to proceed by Walfisch Bay.—Necessary outfit.—Prospects of the Route.—Travelling Cortège.—Servants and Dogs.—Arrival at Walfisch Bay.—The Natives.—Extraordinary Mirage.—The Kuisip River.—Tobacco.—Ride-Oxen.—Disembarking.—Misadventure at Starting.—Perils of the Desert.—The 'Nara.—The Mission at Scheppmansdorf.

It was in 1849 that I determined upon a long travel in Africa. I had been there once; and then, landing at Alexandria, sailed or rode far beyond all the deserts, temples, and cataracts of Egypt, until I had fairly entered the "Soudan," or country of the Blacks—that zone of the tropical vegetation, to which the name of Central Africa properly applies.

It was a tour hastily performed, but still sufficient to imbue or poison me with that fascination for further enterprise, which African tourists have so especially felt—a fascination which has often enough proved its

power by urging the same traveller to risk his comfort, his health, and his life, over and over again, and to cling with pertinacity to a country which after all seems to afford little else but hazard and hardships, ivory and fever.

The motive which principally induced me to undertake this journey was the love of adventure. I am extremely fond of shooting, and that was an additional object; and lastly such immense regions of Africa lie utterly unknown, that I could not but feel that there was every probability of much being discovered there, which, besides being new, would also be useful and interesting. A large field lay open to any explorer who might wish to attempt the enterprise, and I chose to undertake the task.

The discovery that was made of Lake Ngami, in South Africa, gave a direction to my plans; and in the beginning of 1850 I fixed on the Cape as the point at which to enter Africa.

Many South African travellers and sportsmen were then in London; so that I received every information about the Bechuana country up to 300 or 400 miles north of the Orange River, which has been most successfully shot over by several of our countrymen; and through the very kind interest which several influential members of the Geographical Society took in my proceedings, I was readily enabled to start, perfectly *au fait* as to what was known and what was wanted to be known in South Africa.

I now began my preparations in good earnest. Mr. Andersson, a Swedish gentleman and a naturalist,

consented to accompany me; and to his perseverance and energy I have since been in the highest degree indebted. I collected together all the things I could think of, or that my friends were kind enough to suggest to me, as advisable to take.

I knew that at least the first part of my journey would have to be undertaken in waggons, in each of which I was assured four thousand pounds' weight could be carried without risk across the country, so far as it had been penetrated, and therefore I was not necessarily stinted in the quantity of comforts I could carry from Europe; but as to the latter part of my expedition I was aware that the probability was that I should have to leave my waggons, and to travel either by boat or on the backs of some beasts of burden, or possibly even to walk, in which case I should have to content myself with far less luggage. I therefore collected my things together, on the principle of having them as light as possible, and in duplicate, the half of which I could leave *en cache*, when I had to quit my waggons, as a store to fall back upon should I happen to meet with robbery or accident.

In my perfect ignorance of what would be the most acceptable presents, and what were the best articles of exchange among the people I should meet with, I made a great collection of all sorts of ornaments, so that I had a store like a pedlar's shop; for besides the more staple articles of guns, beads, knives, and gaudily printed calico, I bought or collected looking-glasses, accordions, hunting-coats, my friends' old

uniforms, burning-glasses, swords, gilt belts, immense bracelets, anklets, yards of picture chains for necklaces, Jews'-harps, mosaic rings; lastly, I explored the shops of Drury Lane for some theatrical finery, and a magnificent crown rewarded my search, which I vowed to place on the head of the greatest or most distant potentate I should meet with in Africa.

On the 5th of April, 1850, everything was prepared; I and my boxes were on board an East Indiaman; my last adieu was said, the very last line sent off by the pilot boat, and we were off for the Cape.

I had plenty of occupation on board ship in arranging my things, trying to learn the Bechuana language, practising with a sextant, and reading up books; so that the time passed as agreeably as can be expected in a sea voyage. It so happened that the ship in which I had taken my berth carried a number of emigrants—a fact which the careful agent only let us find out at the last moment—but I liked the crowding and bustle of it amazingly. The emigrants were not in the least in the way of the cabin passengers, for we, of course, had the poop to ourselves; and looking down from it, the deck had all the appearance of a crowded fair.

The emigrants were a squalid starved-looking set at first, but six weeks of rest and good feeding made a wonderful change in their condition; and as we sailed into the warm weather, and they could sit about the decks, they began to think of their personal appearance, and to wash and tidy themselves and put their clothes to rights. It was amusing to see how soon they

divided themselves into cliques, and how high and mighty the party that sat under the left corner of the poop were, and how they looked down on those who sat elsewhere. Anyhow we had a pleasant sail, though some eighty days had passed before we were in Table Bay, and among the white stone and green-shuttered houses of Cape Town.

I intended to make a stay here of a few weeks, and then to sail on to Algoa Bay, whence my land journey was to have been commenced. I therefore took the earliest opportunity of presenting my letters of introduction, and I hoped that chance would soon throw much information, valuable to me, within my reach. I cannot sufficiently express how much kindness I received during my stay in Cape Town from all my acquaintance there. Everybody that I was thrown with seemed to take the greatest interest in my excursion, and I was referred and introduced to all those whose experience or information might be of any use to me.

I had not, however, arrived many days, when news came that materially affected my plans, and in the end gave them a somewhat different direction. The emigrant Boers — those Dutch colonists who had rebelled and run away from us—had broken out into open revolt. They invested the whole breadth of the habitable country, north of the Orange River, through which the direct way to Lake Ngami lies; and information was received that they had resolutely refused the passage of any stranger from the colony through their country; that they had already turned

back some travellers, and that in all probability they would send a "commando" to take immediate and exclusive possession of the lake country. Sir Harry Smith, then Governor of the Cape, was so good as to put me in immediate possession of the news, and strongly dissuaded me from attempting to pass them, not because there was any risk to my life, but because after the tedious journey of six weeks or two months that led to their country, I should be met by these Boers, and almost to a certainty stopped, robbed, and turned back. There was no road to the left of these people, because they live up to the verge of the great Karrikarri desert, which takes up all the middle of South Africa, whilst any party taking the road to their right would have to pass in the first instance through the whole length of the Caffre country, and then to the fever-stricken neighbourhood of the west coast. In fact when the Boers chose to stop all communication from the Colony northwards, by the usual route, they were perfectly able to do so.

In a few days the intelligence that had before been received about the Boers' intentions became more fully confirmed, and I had to think of other ways of getting to the tropical lands of South Africa. My first thought was to try the east coast, by Delagòa Bay, but that plan was instantly abandoned on account of the fearful unhealthiness of the district. Next I thought of the Mozambique, and of landing at Quillimaine—a plan which was warmly advocated by a Portuguese gentleman of the highest standing at that place, Signore Isidore Pereira.

His father had crossed Africa from Mozambique to Benguela, and he himself had travelled much, and was in intimate relation with the chiefs of many of the surrounding parts. He chanced to be passing through Cape Town when I was there *en route* to Rio. He took the kindest interest in my plans, gave me very full information upon what he knew of the interior, and subsequently furnished me with credentials to different Portuguese gentlemen at the more distant of their settlements. If I had been under no sort of tie, I should have slaved at learning Portuguese in Cape Town until the first ship sailed for Mozambique, and then have gone by her—but I was engaged to take my travelling companion by some means of conveyance, by which he could bring home a complete collection of the Natural History of the country; and Signore Pereira told me that no beasts of burden were used in the interior of Mozambique, but that all luggage was carried on men's backs, and the traveller himself in a palanquin. This way of travelling would never have answered the object Andersson had in view, and I therefore did not feel justified in proposing it to him. At last a plan was suggested, and very strongly urged upon me, chiefly by some merchants, of sailing to Walfisch Bay, and thence travelling with waggons; this was the idea I finally adopted. I heard that though all was desert by the sea coast between the Cape Colony and Benguela, yet that beyond this desert not only habitable but very fertile country was to be found. As to distance, Walfisch Bay was of all places most favourably situated for an excursion into the

interior, and there were Missionary establishments already formed from near the coast to many days' journey inwards. I was referred to a person who had carried on for some years a cattle trade between Walfisch Bay and the countries near it and the Cape. He had built a store at the Bay, and had had a vessel of his own there; sometimes he sent the cattle by her to St. Helena, sometimes he sold them to the whalers and guano ships which then were numerous, and often put in to him for provisions, and lastly he had driven large herds of them overland to the Cape—by a road to the *west* of that Karrikarri desert, of which I spoke a few lines back, and to the *east* of which the Boers and Bechuanas reside. All about this line of country the Namaqua Hottentots live, and up it some fifteen or twenty years ago Sir James Alexander was the first to explore a waggon road. My informant, the cattle trader, had himself seen nothing but arid worthless country, but he strongly stated his belief in the fertility of Damara land, into which no white man had ever penetrated, but on the borders of which the Missionary stations are placed.

I then went to the agents and friends of the Missionary Societies to which those stations belonged, and the trader's account was very fully confirmed by them. I was informed that the Damaras were considered by the Missionaries as a most interesting nation, and one well worthy of exploring, and that an expedition had long been contemplated by them to go through Damara land, to see what field might lie open for their labours beyond it. I was very kindly assured of every

assistance on their part, and my friends insisted on the great advantage that I should have, if the first stage of my journey was made in company with persons who had experience of the country and acquaintance with the language. Moreover, a novice had just arrived from Germany, and was waiting for the earliest opportunity of being shipped off to join his future fellow labourers. So far matters seemed promising enough; but one point was certain, that everything I might want must be taken from Cape Town, as nothing whatever but oxen could be bought where the Missionaries were.

Servants, waggons, and things of every kind, I must take with me, for the ship would land me on the desert sand—four tedious months' journey from Cape Town; and when she sailed away all communication thence would, for at least a year, be at an end. Now if I had been going to travel in any of the usual ways, as with pack-horses, mules, camels, boats, and so forth, and with people I knew something about, I should not have had the least anxiety; but oxen were creatures I had no experience with, or of Cape half-castes either. Cape Town is proverbially the worst place in the Colony to get waggon drivers and leaders from, and I did not much fancy the undertaking; but still go somewhere I must, and I could think of no other alternative but Walfisch Bay. I therefore consoled myself with the idea that, if the whole affair broke down at the very first, Andersson and I would still find protection from the Missionaries, and that if on the other hand we could push on at all, we could probably

get a great way. So I began resolutely to make my preparations.

I will try to put in a few words the whole of the information that I could get, and upon which I had to act. Walfisch Bay was perfectly desert, though traders had lived there. The nearest water was three miles off, and that in very small quantities. The nearest place where cattle could thrive was between twenty and thirty miles from the coast. This was the first Missionary station,—it was called Scheppmansdorf. Thence a journey of ten or twelve days inland over wretched country led to two other stations; they were the furthest; and all beyond them northwards was unknown. These last were in Damara land; the Namaqua Hottentots lived between them and the Cape. A small pen and ink map was also shown me, but it was blotted and not very intelligible. No oxen could be bought until I arrived at the furthest stations. If I bought them from the Damaras they were untaught; if from the Namaquas taught oxen; the horse distemper was very severe, and no horse would live throughout the year. The Namaquas were always fighting with the Damaras, and it was very doubtful whether having travelled amongst the one tribe, the other would permit me to pass through their country. No money was used or known, nothing but articles of barter,—iron things for the most part among the Damaras, clothing and guns among the Namaquas. Lastly, that the great man of all the country, who could do what he liked, and of whom everybody stood in awe, was Jonker Africaner. It was said that he had a wholesome dread of the English

Government, and unlimited respect for a large letter with a large seal, but that I had much better keep out of his way. This I think is a faithful summary of all that I could learn, and I soon set to work to act upon it.

Cape Town abounds with mules, small well-bred looking things, so I made inquiries and bought eight that had been well broken into harness, and were in good condition; I could only buy one pack-mule, which made my ninth. Mules had withstood the distemper so well in Bechuana country, that I trusted that at least half of them would live until my wanderings were ended. I then bought a large strongly-built cart for them to draw, and with it I purposed to make my first expedition up the country, carrying the heavy articles of exchange and bringing back oxen. I also bought two waggons—I believe the only two travelling waggons in Cape Town—for now-a-days the march of intellect has inspired even the ponderous Dutchmen, and they make good roads and use lighter vehicles. These were to be drawn by the oxen that I intended to buy in the country, and the mules, as I calculated, would be strong enough to pull them from Walfisch Bay to Scheppmansdorf, the first station, and thence to go on with the cart and articles of exchange. As there was no grass at Walfisch Bay, I took plenty of corn for my cattle, and a cask of good water for ourselves; the mules would drink at Sand Fountain, the place three miles off. I only took two horses, as I knew they would be victims to distemper before the important part of my journey commenced; and I bought but few

additional articles of exchange for I hoped to obtain enough game to supply us with daily food, in addition to the few sheep we should take with us as slaughter cattle. This was a sad mistake, as I found out afterwards. I was aware I should require at least sixty waggon oxen,—two spans of from fourteen to sixteen for each waggon. As Namaqua land was out of my intended route, and as I had been so strongly advised not to go there, I took only enough clothing, &c., to buy some forty or sixty oxen there, and iron things enough to buy 150 from the Damaras; the surplus beyond what I immediately wanted being meant to cover the unavoidable expenses of travelling. I had, as I mentioned before from England, a large and indeed an expensive set of "presents" but my great error was in not taking far more things of *known* exchangeable value, and in having taken those "presents" which the natives really cared very little for.

I felt quite sure that everything connected with my waggons was right, because I got more than one experienced friend to look them over; and having engaged my vessel, a schooner of some 100 tons, all except my servants were at length in readiness. I wanted, in the first instance, a headman—one who had travelled with oxen and knew the work—a man with a character that he could not afford to lose, under whom I could put every detail, and whom I would pay highly; but I could find no such person in Cape Town. I, however, engaged a Portuguese, John Morta, a most thoroughly trustworthy man, who, though he did not in the least fulfil the conditions I have just mentioned,

was honest in the extreme, and with whom I received an excellent character; next, I hired Timboo, a black, liberated by one of our cruisers years ago, on capturing a slave-ship in the Mozambique. He, too, had an admirable character, and could do a little of everything. I do not think he would have joined me had he not been suspected of too active interference (on the loyal side) during the late anti-convict movement, which made it convenient for him to leave Cape Town for a season. There was some story about his having had a personal conflict with an influential leader of the opposition. Timboo was an excellent groom, and had some acquaintance with oxen. Besides him, I got John St. Helena, as waggon driver, and his brother, for leader; John Williams, a square-built, impudent, merry fellow, and a right useful servant, was another leader; and a young scamp, Gabriel, who clung to my heels wherever I went in Cape Town, and who undertook to be agent in getting me dogs, horses, or anything else, begged so earnestly to go with me, that I enrolled him also in my corps. I still wanted a second waggon driver, and at the last moment took a man out of a waggon-maker's shop, though I did not much like him. As for dogs, although I was assured that I could find any number in the country, still I thought that a few Cape Town mongrels would be of no harm, and Gabriel brought me a whole pack for approval, at an uniform rate of 2*s*. 6*d*. each; one good dog was given to Andersson, and by entreating that a sentence of execution, which was passed on a fine-looking Newfoundland, for trespassing in the barracks, might be commuted

to transportation for life, I obtained him also. I had a fancy to take a small dog which could be carried in the waggon all day, and would be wakeful at night, so I bought a spaniel, on which I lavished infinite affection, and who rejoiced in the name of Dinah.

Andersson was most busy in packing and arranging my things. I don't know how I should have got through the work myself: the confusion seemed endless. At length, after we had been for three weeks or a month in Cape Town, the schooner was brought close into shore; the kicking mules were boated into her; the heaps of wheels, axletrees, &c., that belonged to the four vehicles of the Missionary and myself disappeared off the quay; all the boxes were on board, and, last of all, a cab-full of lamenting curs were embarked and sent away.

In the second week of August, 1850, we set sail, and on the eve of the 20th the low sandy shore of the land we were bound for came in sight. We rounded Pelican Point (on which pelicans were certainly sitting), and came into a wide bay, the shores of which were dancing with mirage, and presented the appearance of the utmost desolation. The store-house was a wretched affair to have received so grand a name—being a wooden shanty, about the size of a small one-storied cottage—which we could not for a long time see from on board our ship. The name of the bay, "Walfisch," is Dutch, and means whale-fish: the sailors have corrupted it to Walwich, and, lastly, to Woolwich Bay, all which aliases may be found in different maps. There are a great many whales of the sort called "humpbacks" all about this

coast; in coming here we passed through a "school" or herd. It was a magnificent sight; for the whole sea around us was ploughed up by them. We went up the Bay very cautiously, for it has never been properly surveyed; and different charts give most widely different plans of it. At nightfall, we anchored a mile or so off shore. We could see no natives; and not a sign of life anywhere, excepting in the immense flocks of pelicans and of flamingos and other sea-birds. And this, it appears, is the character of the entire coast between the Orange River and the Portuguese territory—a physical barrier which has saved the natives who live behind it from the infliction of a foreign slave-trade.

The books of sailing directions say that no fresh water can be obtained on the coast for the whole of that distance; but this is a mistake, as in Sandwich Harbour, some twenty miles south of Walfisch Bay, there is, at least at present, a copious supply.

In the morning we saw some savages about, and brought the schooner as close in shore as seemed safe, about one-third of a mile from the store-house; and at midday, the captain, the new Missionary, and ourselves landed. A row of seven dirty squalid natives came to meet us. Three had guns: they drew up in a line, and looked as powerful as they could; and the men with guns professed to load them. They had Hottentot features, but were of a darker colour, and a most ill-looking appearance: some had trousers, some coats of skins, and they clicked, and howled, and chattered, and behaved like baboons. This was my first impression, and that

of all of us; but the time came when, by force of comparison, I looked on these fellows as a sort of link to civilisation. They were well enough acquainted with sailors; and the advent of a ship was of course a great godsend for them, as they bartered, for tobacco, clothes, and all sorts of luxuries, the goats' milk and oxen which a few of them had; but they had been savagely ill-used more than once, and had occasionally retaliated. The captain of them soon made his appearance, and we became very amicable, and walked towards Sand Fountain, signs and smiles taking the place of spoken language. A letter was sent on to the Missionary at Scheppmansdorf, a cotton handkerchief and a stick of tobacco being the payment to the messenger for his twenty-five miles' run. We passed over a broad flat, flooded in spring-tides, following the many waggon-tracks that here seemed so permanent as not to be effaced by years. We were surrounded by a mirage of the most remarkable intensity. Objects 200 yards off were utterly without definition: a crow, or a bit of black wood, would look as lofty as the trunk of a tree. Pelicans were exaggerated to the size of ships with the studding-sails set; and the whole ground was wavy and seething, as though seen through the draught of a furnace. This was in August, the month in which mirage is most remarkable here; it is excessive at all times, and has been remarked by every one who has seen the place. A year and a half later I tried on two occasions to map the outline of the Bay, which was then comparatively clear, but still the mirage quite prevented me; an object which I took as a mark from

one point being altogether undistinguishable when I had moved to my next station.

After proceeding half a mile we came to the bed of the Kuisip, a river that only runs once in four or five years, but, when it does, sweeps everything before it. The bed was very broad, and hardly definable: there were marks here and there like the bottom of dried-up pools, where the ground has been made into a paste and afterwards cracked by the drought. Bushes (Dabby bushes I have always heard them called) not unlike fennel, but from eight to twelve feet high, grew plentifully; a prickly gourd, the 'Nara, with long runners, covered numerous sand-hillocks; and lastly, high shifting sand dunes, on either side, completed the scene. We were so much out of condition, that the depth of the sand and the heat of the sun (at least, what we then thought was heat) gave us a good tiring, and we were heartily glad when Sand Fountain and its watering-place came in sight. My imagination had pictured, from its name, a bubbling streamlet; but in reality it was a hole, six inches across, of green stagnant water. It was perfectly execrable to taste, as many years had elapsed since the Kuisip last ran, and the water which drains from its damp sand to the hollow here, had become almost putrid, and highly saline. However, it was drinkable, and I was satisfied that with plenty of digging enough could be obtained to water my mules. Some years ago, when the trader lived here, the water was copious and very good; but all these sort of wells are very uncertain, even more so than the flow of the river

on which they depend. We came back much as we went, and bought five ostrich eggs that were brought to us, giving seven sticks of tobacco for the lot, but this was a piece of extravagance, five being the proper price. Cavendish tobacco is that which has been nearly always bartered here; it is, as most smokers know, in sticks, each stick weighing about an ounce, and worth a penny. I had taken only a hundredweight with me; but five hundredweight would not have proved at all too much. We took the captain and an ill-looking Hottentot, who appeared to be a relation of his, on board, as the two were inseparable; and we employed ourselves in picking bush tics from our persons, for the bushes swarmed with them.

During the night a gun was heard on shore, and a fire was lighted, which proved to be made by the Missionary, Mr. Bam, and Stewartson, who had been a cattle-trader, but had lately lost everything, so that he, his wife, and children could not afford to return to Cape Town, but lived at the same station with Mr. Bam. We had sent the letter at midday; they received it about night-fall, and had ridden down on oxen in five hours. I had up to that moment no conception that oxen ever were, or had been, used as hacks, except possibly as a joke; but here were two fine-looking beasts, saddled, and with sticks through their noses, and a thin bridle fastened to the stick, and tied to a log of wood, and really they looked uncommonly well, and not at all out of their element.

We at once proceeded to disembark. The horses and mules had to swim: the sailors managed it rather

clumsily, and nearly drowned one; but at last the creatures were all got on shore. Heavy packages had next to be landed in the dingy, and we got through a deal of work. In the evening I rode with Mr. Bam to the Hottentot kraal, by Sand Fountain, and of course listened with great interest to all he had to tell me of the country. With the Damaras he had little or no acquaintance. He was born in the Cape; had made several overland journeys; spoke much of the difficulty of travelling here, both from want of food and the badness of the road; and did not hold out to me the slightest encouragement as regarded my journey.

After sunset Mr. Bam returned on board to sleep, and to get a good substantial dinner there, which is not to be despised by a resident in these parts. I pitched my tent on shore, and slept in guard of the things. My men had worked with very good spirit through the day in landing them, though it was hard work, and they were wet all the time. Some slept on shore and some on board. I had a heavy spar, which lay on the beach, carried under the lee of the store-house, and picketed my mules and horses to it. The night was very chilly, damp, and windy, and the animals extremely restless. In the morning we found that my two horses had broken loose, and escaped. Timboo and John St. Helena went directly on their tracks; but as hours passed, and they did not return, I became much alarmed. On Mr. Bam's coming on shore he advised me at once to send some natives with provisions after the men, as all was desert for forty miles and more round the Bay;

the horses would never perhaps be overtaken by the men, who would possibly follow their tracks till they were exhausted, and so be themselves unable to return. I therefore sent two natives directly,—Mr. Bam interpreting for me—one with provisions, and the other with orders to go on after the tracks, and bring the animals back. Late in the afternoon my men made their appearance, looking sadly exhausted. They had gone very far, until they dared not go further; and then, intending to return by a short cut back, soon became bewildered among the sand-hills, and quite lost their course. They were on the point of going altogether wrong, when the mist cleared away, and showed them the sea and the Bay, with the schooner in it, in the far distance. After a long walk they came to the waggon-tracks, which took them to Sand Fountain, where they obtained water, and there the Hottentots met them.

The sailors had landed some of my things very carelessly indeed, dropping bags of flour into the sea. I made a great row, with much effect, about it. Some goats were driven down to sell. I bought two kids for a second-hand soldier's coat, without the buttons: I had three dozen, and gave sixpence each for them at a Jew's shop in Cape Town.

The horses were still missing. I sent the captain, "Frederick," and another man, on their ride-oxen upon the spoor, for I became extremely anxious for their lives; there is not a blade of grass or a drop of water where they are gone. Frederick would not not go unless I promised him and his friend a really

respectable coat and a pair of trousers, to be paid if they brought the horses back—not otherwise. The agreement was made, and off they started. I wish I had brought more old clothes. Two coats and the etceteras are a sad drain upon my wardrobe. Another accident happened: my large white dog, that I begged from the barracks, took fright at the waggon-whips which we had landed, and were cracking: he ran straight away, and was never seen by us again. Flamingos gathered here in immense flocks; their flight is very curious; the long projecting neck in front, and the long legs behind, make them look in the distance more like dragon-flies than birds. I broke a pelican's wing with a cartridge of swan-shot, and had a chase of a good mile after him before I came up: the Hottentots eat him. The Bay seems, from all accounts, to swarm with fish; but, though I have a small seine net, I have no time now to set it.

August 23.—The horses are found! They had strayed nearly forty miles (I saw their tracks long afterwards), and Frederick drove them to Scheppmansdorf for food and water, as it was much nearer for them than the Bay. He came to claim his apparel: I grudgingly enough gave him the only coats I could; they were the workmanship of Stultz: I had intended them for full-dress occasions at Missionary chapel-meetings, &c. But it could not be helped; and the greasy savages put them on, exulting in their altered appearance.

I have mentioned above the 'Nara, a prickly gourd, which grows here: it is the staple food of these Hottentots, and a very curious plant. In the first

place, it seems to grow nowhere except in the Kuisip and in the immediate environs of Walfisch Bay; and, in the second place, every animal eats it; not only men, cattle, antelopes, and birds, but even dogs and hyenas. It is a very useful agent towards fixing the sands; for as fresh sand blows over, and covers the plant, it continually pushes on its runners up to the air, until a huge hillock is formed, half of the plant, half of sand. I do not much like its taste; it is too rich and mawkish.

The waggons that belonged to the Missionaries in the country came down to the beach to carry away their supplies, which had arrived by my ship. A vessel would have been chartered for them if I had not previously engaged it. They had arranged that one should be sent every two years to bring them their things of barter—clothes and groceries, and whatever else they might want; for the overland journey was found to be more expensive and less practicable, as it takes quite four months to reach Cape Town from Walfisch Bay, and the roads are so rocky that a waggon is seriously risked by the journey. The oxen, too, are probably much worn out, and, after all, only some 1500lb., net weight, can be carried in each waggon. On the other hand, a vessel from the Cape arrives in a week, and can, of course, carry anything. The trip costs about 100*l.*: it would be much less if it was not that the prevalent winds make it a matter of some four weeks to return. Chance vessels hardly ever arrive now-a-days at Walfisch Bay: not one had come for more than a year.

All our things were at length landed; the wells at Sand Fountain yielded enough water for the mules; the storehouses both there and at the Bay were unlocked, and clearcd out to receive my luggage; the waggons and cart were pieced together; and the schooner sailed away.

CHAPTER II.

Sand Fountain.—A lesson to the Natives.—A present.—News of a Lion.—Scheppmansdorf.—A narrow escape.—A Missionary's Establishment.—Native Huts.—Missions.—A Lion Hunt.—Preparations for the Road.—Native Trees.—The Hottentots.—Character of the Country.—Mode of breaking in an Ox.—Arrangement of the Baggage.—A Prosperous Start.—The Swakop.—Night Bivouac.—Labours of the March.—Loss of a Horse and a Mule.—The Lions' chase.—Attempt to avenge the loss.—A narrow escape.—Animal food.—The Ghou Damup.—Erongo Mountain.—Intense heat.—The Tsobis River.—Ride-Oxen.—Native Servants.—Their Cape Town Life.—A Giraffe hunt.—Change of Country.—An Ostrich Egg.—Approach to Otjimbinguè.—Hans Larsen.

THE Missionary who had come with us from Cape Town went off at once to Scheppmansdorf with Mr. Bam, whose oxen fetched his waggon and all his things, and who very kindly promised to give me a help with mine, when the oxen were sufficiently rested, if I would first get the luggage as far as Sand Fountain. The mules were therefore harnessed, and worked excellently, carting my heavy things through the deep sand; and they made sometimes two and sometimes three trips a-day between that place and the Bay. Andersson and myself slept at Sand Fountain. John Morta cooked for us, and the others drove the cart, and took care of my store at the Bay.

Mr. Bam told me I should have great trouble in first going up the country, unless I had a person to guide me, and that there was not a Hottentot with him who could go. I had no interpreter for them, and they were frightened at the Damaras. Stewartson said that he was going in about two months, and would then be very happy to show me the way. It appeared, on further conversation, that the business which detained him from going at once was, that he had to make a fence round his garden to keep it from Mr. Bam's pigs. So I arranged with two of my men that they should go and help him to get through the work quickly, while my others were employed with me. After a week everything was returned to Sand Fountain. Andersson and myself had employed ourselves in walking about, superintending the work. The Hottentots of course crowded round us every day, but they did not at all trouble us: only one or two of them were impudent, and, as I did not know how much thrashing they would stand, I let them alone. I took some pains to exhibit and explain to them the mechanism of a spring rat-trap, and when they sufficiently comprehended its object, I gave them to understand that my boxes were all guarded by rat-traps, so that if they put their hands into them to steal, they would infallibly be caught.

The black and white crows almost attacked our larder for food. They live on the dead fish that lie about the beach, which indeed is almost the only food hereabouts for them. The natives brought us milk every morning to barter for tobacco, and also some goats. Mr. Bam very kindly sent me a slaughter ox.

It seemed to me the most princely of presents. Meat keeps wonderfully well here in this season (August and September), and even dries instead of tainting; but I subsequently found it otherwise in December. I had taken plenty of salt meat with me from Cape Town, and rice and biscuits—quite two months' provisions—for I knew it must be a long time before we could fall into the ways of the country, and find our own commissariat there.

I gave the mules a day's rest, and then started with my first load to Scheppmansdorf. Andersson remained behind. Mr. Bam had sent me word that a lion had come over from the Swakop River, and was prowling about and very daring, and that a hunt should be got up at once. As we travelled sometimes in the soft sand of the river bed, sometimes on the gravelly plain, through which it runs, we kept a sharp look out for the track that had been seen there: we found it after we had travelled ten miles. The natives amused themselves by cleverly imitating it; they half clenched their fist and pressed their knuckles into the sand. It was curious to see to what a distance the lion kept to the waggon-road, walking down the middle of it as though it had been made for him. I listened deferentially to Timboo and John St. Helena, who were quite learned on the subject of tracking. Except some ostriches scudding about, some crows, lizards, and a few small birds, there was no other sign of animal life, but we saw spoors now and then of the little steinbok, a very pretty gazelle some sixteen inches high.

We followed the waggon path till an hour after night-fall, when the damp feel of the air, distant lights and barking of dogs, announced that we had arrived at Scheppmansdorf. Mr. Bam welcomed me most kindly, introduced me to his wife, gave me an out-house for my boxes and myself, and we formed a very pleasant party that evening, more especially as I heard that my horses were quite well and fat. We talked over the lion, and it seemed that he had been prowling about the station continually;—that he was a well-known beast, who usually hunted the lower part of the Swakop, and had killed an immense number of cattle;—many a time have I heard them reckoned over,—fifty oxen, three horses, one donkey, and innumerable calves and dogs. He had often been chased but was too wary to be shot —and so forth. We talked over the lion at Mr. Bam's till a late hour: he assured me that the animal would prowl about that night, as he had done so every day for a week, and that if I wanted to try my rifle, I could track him in the morning. He and Stewartson had taken my horses the day before to hunt him, and they found him and gave chase; at last he came to bay, when they rode to the top of a sand-hill immediately above him, where the beast not waiting to be fired at charged them. Mr. Bam galloped off, but Stewartson's horse being thoroughly blown, would not stir a step, until the lion's head appeared over the sand-hill just above the astonished animal, who probably had no idea of what was taking place, for Stewartson seems to have been "craning" over the ridge of the bank. I was glad to learn, not only on

account of Stewartson's safety, but also as a proof of the discretion and speed of my horse, that the next second of time left the lion behind at a safer distance.

Mr. Bam's household, which I may as well describe, as it gives a good idea of a Missionary establishment, was as follows—Himself, Mrs. Bam, a numerous family, and an interpreter, who helped at the schools, could drive a waggon, and was the factotum, made the party that took their meals together, the interpreter being very deferential, and only speaking when spoken to. Besides these were a few hangers on, more or less trustworthy, and always ready for a job. The house is a tolerably sized cottage or bothy, all on one floor, built of course by the Missionary himself, as well as he was able to build it; the workmanship was naturally very rough, but as it takes far less labour to use trees for the uprights and rafters than planks, it is also very strong. Chairs, a table, and a bureau, were imported from Cape Town; the bed, bookshelves and so forth, made here. The wife does the whole house work, cleaning the rooms, managing the children, cooking the dinner, and, what I never liked, waiting at table. These ladies have the hardest and rudest of occupations, but, I must candidly say, they seem to like this life extremely, and I am sure that Missionaries must find great favour in the eyes of the fairer sex, judging from the charming partners that they have the good fortune to obtain. As to the natives, they make their huts as they like, and where they like; they plant sticks in a circle of six feet across, then bend the tops together

and tie them with strips of bark; lastly, they wattle the sides and plaster them up.

Scheppmansdorf is prettily situated on a kind of island in the middle of the Kuisip River bed near a clump of fine trees, somewhat resembling elms. At one side stands the Missionary's and Stewartson's houses, in the middle is the white-washed chapel, and round the other sides lie the huts twenty or thirty in number. All around is sand; to the south there a perfect sea of sand-dunes from 100 to 150 feet high, to the north the Naanip plain. A small streamlet rises from the ground, and runs through the place, watering about three acres of garden and field, and losing itself half a mile off in a reedy pond full of wild fowl.

The natives crowd the church and sing the hymns, which, being about three quarters articulate and one quarter clicks, produce a very funny effect. The Missionary is, to all intents and purposes, Lord paramount of the place, though he is modest, and refers matters as much as possible to the captain of the tribe. Savage countries are parcelled out by a tacit understanding between different Missionary Societies, priority of occupation affording the ground of claim, it not being customary for one sect to establish its stations in a land where another sect is already settled. Mr. Bam and the other gentlemen I was thrown amongst belonged to a German Mission, and were all of them Germans or Dutch. Further to the interior, and communicating with the Cape, not by the sea, but overland, are some English Wesleyan stations. Subsequently, I passed

through these, but at the time of my visit they were unoccupied.

To return to the lion. When I turned into bed I listened long for a roar or some token of his presence, but in vain; and at last I dropped asleep. In the morning we found his tracks all about us, he had paid particular attention to a hut that was lying rather apart from the others, and had been prowling all round it. Stewartson volunteered to accompany me, he disapproved of horseback, and mounted his trusty ox. Mr. Stewartson's profession in early life was that of a tailor—though subsequently a dissenting minister, and afterwards a cattle trader. I confess that I felt, as I rode by his side, I had rather have been introduced to the genus "lion" by a person of almost any other calling, and carried by any other kind of animal than my bucolic friend's. I took two of my men with me, and off we set with a few natives. The lion had walked backwards and forwards so much in the night, that it was long before we found the last tracks he had made. We followed them very quickly, as his broad foot-print was unmistakeable on the sand; there was a growing interest as we found how he had stopped and looked down and considered whether a bush by one side would suit him or not, but had decided in the negative and gone slowly on. We peered about and marched very silently; the bushes got thicker, and the pace slower, when we stopped short at a well-trodden part whence the lion had evidently just risen, for the sand was still warm from his touch. Had he gone away, or was he

close by, was the question. We were all mixed up together. Of a sudden the lion stood up, twelve paces in front, looked over his shoulder at us, made an easy noiseless bound, and was gone. His action was so steady, so smooth, so entirely devoid of hurry, that I could perfectly understand how a person might be seized through miscalculating the speed of his advance. As it was, he disappeared before one of our guns was well up to our shoulders. I am sure, if he had come at us, he could have done what mischief he liked. My horse would have shied on to the horns of Stewartson's ox, and in the narrow pass we should all have tumbled about and rolled one on another. The cover into which he went, and on the border of which he had been lying, was far too thick to be practicable for our further pursuit, though we did make several good attempts at dislodging him. I returned very crest-fallen at our want of success, but I had now seen the animal and better understood the elements of hunting him.

As we rode back across the plain we saw vast numbers of old gemsbok tracks, although there are but few of these fine antelopes in the neighbourhood; but impressions made on this crisp gravelly soil take years to efface; they seem to be almost stereotyped; and a very few animals and waggons have produced an extraordinary number of spoors.

I mentioned that Scheppmansdorf was built in a rude circle. To the middle of this the oxen of the place come of their own accord every night as the evening sets in, and lie there till the early morning; they find shelter

from the wind, and are certainly sensible of protection. Besides this the ox is a sociable domestic animal, and loves fires and the neighbourhood of men. The oxen, therefore, lay close up to the doorway of the outhouse in which I slept, and the night was pitch dark. Now, after we had all gone to bed and were fast asleep, there was a rush and an outcry, and people hallooing and dogs barking, for the lion had got into the midst of the oxen. I confess I was glad there was a door to my outhouse, for fear the lion should walk in; however, all became quiet, and I soon went to sleep again.

A grand hunt was determined on in the morning; every available native was pressed into the service. Mr. Bam rode one horse, I the other, and Stewartson his ox. Johannis, Captain Frederick, and some other Hottentots, came mounted on their oxen, and we went off after breakfast with as many cur dogs as would follow us. The proceedings were much the same as before. After eight miles his spoor went into a bush; we threw stones in and shouted, and up he got about one hundred yards off. I purposely did not fire, as my horse was in a bad position for me to take as good an aim as I wished, and nobody else fired either; but we galloped after him in full view, the object being to bring him to bay, or to get a nearer shot as he ran. This last I hardly expected whilst he was moving, for my horses were not accustomed to be shot from, and it took so much time to pull them up, that the lion had gained a long start again before I could do so. The bushes were in his

favour, and we nearly lost him; but by most skilful tracking the Hottentots came up and often helped us out when we were at fault. Some hours elapsed when, as Mr. Bam and myself were cantering on, we turned the corner of a sand-hill and saw the lion about sixty yards ahead, trotting on, looking over his shoulder. I got my long rifle up, and, sincerely praying that my horse would not kick me off when I fired, I pulled the trigger; the horse was too blown to start, and I placed my two-ounce bullet well into the lion's quarter. He growled and snarled, and bit the wound, but evidently had not heart to chase me, but turned to bay under a bush. There was a sand-hill opposite. We waited till the stragglers came up, and then went behind the sand-hill and dismounted; and Stewartson and ourselves crawled up to the top of it, right above the lion. He was in a tearing passion, and fifty paces from us, yet I could not see him as clearly as I could wish—wild beasts have such a readiness of availing themselves of the smallest bush or tuft of grass as a screen, which he did on this occasion; his head was between his paws, and his tail whirling up the sand. One single shot at the head struck him stone dead. He was a huge gaunt beast, miserably thin, and had a dog of Stewartson's in his inside, which he had snapped up on the werft the night before. The dog was in only five pieces, not at all chewed or even digested; it had been bolted in a hurry, and had probably disagreed with him. The lion was soon skinned. My bullet had passed right alongside the backbone, breaking its way through nearly

half its length. Neither the oxen nor the horses showed that dread of his smell, which they generally do. I even rolled up his hide like a valisse, and carried it behind my saddle, without my steed showing any objection. I cannot to this day imagine why we dismounted and climbed up the sand-hill; but I put myself under the orders of my more experienced friends. It would have been much easier and much safer to have given the animal his finishing wound from horseback.

The next day I had the skin dressed; it was necessary that the load which the cart had to carry up the country should be lessened, and I therefore was driven to pack-oxen, and wanted a hide to cover my saddlebags; Stewartson was to make them for me, and the lion's skin came as a godsend, for I had only one other. I bought two oxen, a black and a red one, from Stewartson, both of which he engaged to break in, so far as to carry such things as would not injure if kicked off. He also hired out to me another ox, and I bought a yellow ride ox, by name Ceylon, from Johannis, the interpreter. Groceries and a gown for his wife settled my account with Stewartson, and a common gun that with Johannis. The four oxen were to carry five or six cwt. between them, which would materially lighten the cart, but still leave it a load of about 1000lbs. I heard constantly from Andersson, who remained at Sand Fountain with most of my men, guarding the boxes till Mr. Bam's oxen were fresh enough to go down and take them. They had a monotonous time of it. A hyena paid them two visits at

night, but got away in the dark unscathed. Little else happened.

September 12th.—The waggons were sent for, full of things, and as some were still left behind, Mr. Bam kindly lent me his light waggon to fetch them. The oxen could hardly get it back, and to my extreme regret when they did so the axletree was found to have been strained; it was, of course, a great annoyance to my worthy host, as no seasoned wood was to be had, from which my carpenter could make another one. There are, indeed, only two kinds of timber trees in Damara and the greater part of Namaqua land; one is the unna, which grows about Scheppmansdorf, and looks something like an elm; the other is the camelthorn, which also is a fine tree, but more gnarled. Unna wood is soft and porous, and of very little use; camelthorn is almost too hard to be worked, it is very heavy indeed, and very brittle; still for want of better wood it has to be used for most carpentering work. We therefore made an expedition with the cart in search of a tree, as none grew within some six miles of Scheppmansdorf. Mr. Bam, my carpenter, and myself, went with tools. After a long search we found one, and my best axe splintered sadly in cutting it down; it was quite a long job to fell it. As it lay we roughly shaped it; and even then had to use all our strength to lift the future axletree into the cart.

When we got it home, I learnt how to season wood in a hurry: a trench was dug, a good fire made in it, and after a time the ashes swept out; then water was

poured in, which steamed the hot earth; lastly, the wood was placed in the trench, covered up, and left to lie for a day.

After two days' hard work, the axletree was formed into shape, the necessary holes were bored through it, and Mr. Bam laid it by, so that if his present one fairly broke, he could, with a day's work and ordinary tools, put in the new one, which, in the meantime, was left to season thoroughly.

I began now to see something of the character of my men, and what they were fit for. They had on the whole worked willingly and well; but a great deal of pilfering had been going on. In the constant loading and unloading of my many things, it was impossible but that several occasions should occur for the servants to steal them, and some had certainly done so. However, I said nothing, but Andersson and myself both kept a sharp look out. Mr. Bam had assured me of the general honesty of the natives at his station, in such strong terms, that I felt I could safely accept a kind offer that he made, and leave all my boxes with him, in the outhouse that I had occupied, and take the whole of my men with me.

It seems that these Hottentots have a great respect for locks and keys; the wooden storehouse of the bay has been left entirely without protection for months, and although the natives knew that it was then full of the very things they valued so highly, no occasion was known of their having broken into it. The sandy soil is a great check upon dishonesty, for

the spoor remains to tell of the thief and his whereabouts.

I had made my first attempts at mapping. From the sand-hills above Scheppmansdorf, Walfisch Bay could be seen clearly; and as many distant mountains were visible from both stations, I could begin triangulating. The mountains of the Swakop, on the other side of the desert plain to our north, were clear in the blue distance. A few peaked hills were more in the foreground, and I took the bearings, as well as the natives could point out, of the place we were first to aim for. Our first stage is a very difficult one. It occupies sixteen hours' actual travelling, exclusive of all stoppages. There is no grass for the oxen, or water either; though a few cup-fulls of the latter can be found in a granite rock after the first twelve hours' journey; and there is generally so thick a mist on the plain, that, travelling, as people generally do, all through the night, there is every probability of losing the path. The consequence is, that the plain is covered with false waggon-roads in every direction, and a great number of oxen have died on the way. The natives of the place are no better than the strangers; as soon as they lose their road they go wandering about, not only till daylight, but till the fog clears away and shows them where they are. Losing the way is the rule here, and not the exception; and a person who has crossed the plain without doing so, rather plumes himself upon the feat.

Stewartson, on his ox, was to be the guide. My men were all to walk; Andersson and myself to ride

the horses, giving a mount now and then to the men. The chestnut mule and four oxen were to be packed with my belongings, one other ox with Stewartson's.

The ceremony of breaking in the black ox had next to be performed, and in this way; the whole herd was driven close up together, and then, Stewartson, with a long thong of leather (a reim), noosed like a lasso, crept in amongst the creatures, and pushed the noose with a stick round the leg of the victim, holding on at the other end of the thong like grim death. The ox bellowed and kicked and galloped on three legs; the herd dispersed, everybody ran to help, and soon the animal, looking highly wroth and disgusted at the treatment, was brought to a stand-still, and another noose thrown over his horns; then, by lugging at the thongs, the beast was tumbled over, his nose pierced with a stick: some old worthless bags were filled with sand, and tied firmly on his back, and he was let go, to plunge and bellow, and to vent his sulkiness on, and tell his story to, his fellow oxen.

Next morning, the packing operation was again gone through, as the pack had become loose; and this was repeated for two or three more days. Now that the ox had a nose-stick, it was much easier to secure him; for when once lassoed by the leg, an active individual could soon snatch the stick. In this way the beast was secured fore and aft, and unless from sulkiness he lay down, could be packed standing. The little red ox was a far more awkward customer than the other. I never witnessed greater vice than the creature showed; and his horns were sadly annoying.

At length, after various delays, the day on which we were destined to start arrived.

The things taken were distributed as follows:—

Pack Oxen.	Load carried.	Gross Weight.	In Cart drawn by 8 Mules.	
		lbs.		lbs.
Ceylon . .	Canvass Bag, No. 1,— Peas, 45 lbs. Sugar, 48 „	97	Common guns . .	112
			Barrel full of presents	56
			6 pots and 2 kettles .	110
			Assegais . . .	56
Stewartson's Ox.	Canvass Bag, No. 2,— Rice, 42 lbs. Coffee, 42 „ Spelter, 25 „	110	Hatchets and spear-heads	25
			Fore and after chests, containing small things, knives, tobacco, tinder-boxes, flints, choppers, and also calico and dresses . . .	196
Black Ox. . .	Skin Bag, No. 1,— Spelter, 75 lbs. Dresses, &c.	135	Biscuits	58
			Tools	23
Red Ox. . .	Skin Bag, No. 2,— Bullets, Moleskin Clothes, 2 Bars lead, Shot, Powder,	130	4 shooting guns (we carried the others) .	36
			Clothes, books, and personal effects of Andersson and myself .	120
			Astronomical instruments, &c. . . .	50
Mule . . .	Tent, 40 lbs. Water, 20 „ &c.	90	Natural history instruments . . .	42
			Men's sleeping things and clothes, about 30 lbs. per man . .	210
				1089

Everything was weighed with a steelyard that I had taken.

For meat, I only took with me five or six thin goats, as I was quite confident of finding game in the Swakop, where vast quantities had been formerly shot. The day was cool, and we started about eleven o'clock in the forenoon. We had been packing the red and black oxen since the early morning; for as fast as the bags were tied on, they kicked them off or loosened them. The red ox could not be held: he was lashed to a tree, and there packed. As soon as they let him

loose, the brute ran about, looking for somebody handy to be tossed: he caught sight of me first, just as I was mounting, and trotted up. I had no idea he meant mischief till he was close by, when he made a most vicious dash at me; and if I had not had spurs, I could never have twisted my horse round enough in time to avoid his aim, for, as it was, the curve of his short sharp horn glanced along and bruised my thigh and the horse's shoulder; but we both escaped its point.

The crisp sand of the desert was very pleasant to travel on; and we made great progress: the mules pulled very well, and all went cheerily. After nightfall we floundered about a little amongst some broken ground, and Stewartson lost his way for a time; but by keeping steadily on by compass, the rounded head of the Granite Rock showed itself against the clear sky, and we off-packed and out-spanned at eleven o'clock to drink coffee and to sleep.

We were up before daylight; and the oxen, being very tired, were submissive, and we were off about half-past six. After four hours, we entered into the broken country that borders the Swakop; and, making our bivouac at the head of a steep path that led down to the river bed, sent the animals down some four miles to eat and drink.

This was the *premier pas* of my journey; and I am sure we were all highly delighted at its success. The only drawback was, that the wretched goats were quite knocked up; and when we went down to the river bed, we could perceive no signs of game. The first

sight of the Swakop, in its deep hollow, charmed us; the plain on which we had travelled was nine or ten hundred feet above our head, and the crumbling rocks that flanked the gorge, which the river had made for itself, were magnificently abrupt. The bed was as smooth as a lawn, and as green with grass—a little sand peeping out here and there,—a thick fringe of high reeds bordered the river bed, clumps of fine camelthorn trees were clustered wherever there was room for them, and a small rivulet of water trickled along; skulls of numerous buffaloes were lying about; and Oosop, for that was the name of the place, seemed a scene in Rasselas' Happy Valley.

We stopped all day enjoying ourselves, and had a good bathe in a hollow beneath a huge rock, which the rivulet had filled with water. There was not a sign of game; not a spoor that was not many days old; and those that were there were chiefly of buffaloes, and all going down towards the mouth of the river.

The Swakop is the artery of half Damara and Namaqua land; all the best watering-places are in it. It is the frontier between those two nations. There are three Missionary stations on its banks; and along its side is the only road that is known to be practicable at all seasons from the sea to the interior. The Kuisip leads into Namaqua land; but the watering-places are few and uncertain: the road by it is execrable in places, and cannot bear comparison with the Swakop. No people inhabit Oosop, or the lower part of the river, except some straggling Ghou Damup, who live, like jackdaws, up in the hills.

These are a very peculiar and scattered race of Negroes, who speak no language but Hottentot, and are frequently slaves to the Bushmen. Who they are, and where they came from, has been a standing enigma; but I subsequently found out much that was interesting about them.

The Hottentots come over now and then from the Bay, when the 'Naras are not in season, and bring their cows and oxen to give them a good feed. The place is not suited for savages; for there are no roots for them to grub up and feed upon, and the river bed is so deep and the rocks so abrupt, that nothing would be easier than to entrap a drove of oxen in it. Anywhere else, when a plundering attack is made, men and oxen scamper off in all directions, but here they would be "pounded."

I had hitherto generally slept under cover, because at Scheppmansdorf there was no place for a bivouac, and the night air was damp and chilly; but here I began to discard my tent, and to sleep by the side of the fire. A large driving-apron, water-proofed on one side and drugget on the other, made my rug, and a blanket and an eider-down quilt, my coverlets. My men had pieces of oiled canvas, which I took for them to sleep on, and blankets or old horse-rugs to cover them. We slept round a fire as large as we could get fuel to make it, and on the lee-side of a bush. The cart stood five or six yards off, and the mules were tied by their halters, and the oxen by their nose-bridles, to the cart and whatever else they could be tied to. My mules were very restless and noisy,

kicking each other, and whinnying all night long; but the oxen were far more sedate, and lay down, looking at the fire with their large eyes, and chewing the cud. The stars were clear, the air was keen and bracing: we had been eating our last goat, and the mules were stuffed full of reeds and green grass.

September 21*st.*—We were off at seven, for packing and harnessing took us about one hour and a-half, and daylight now breaks about half-past five. We only managed to get a cup of coffee before starting. We had bivouacked on the plain, just at the entrance of the gorge that leads down to Oosop, and our course to-day was parallel to the Swakop, and on to Daviéep, another gorge, but not so deep a one as that of Oosop.

The sun, from the first, was extremely hot; we seemed to have quite changed our climate, and the cool sea-breezes were evidently shut out. As the day wore on, the mules showed evident effects of their late change of diet from hard food (corn and dry grass) to green grass and reeds;—all animals, when travelling, are extremely affected by causes like this, and the necessity of the change is often one of the great difficulties of a traveller. We had crossed a ridge; and a huge, rounded mountain (Tinkhas), that faced us, was the principal feature in the landscape. The ground we travelled on was still a crisp gravel, and extended far away to our right; on our left lay broken rocky ground, then the deep cutting of the river bed, which we often could see nothing of, though so near to it, and beyond, a complete chaos of broken crags and rugged hills; while level with the tops of these crags,

and far beyond them, we could clearly see long reaches of another barren plain, the counterpart of the one we were travelling over.

The fact is, we were in wretched travelling condition. An indolent life of high feeding and perfect rest on board ship, is a bad preparation for a journey like ours. Now, on a sudden, we had begun to live without stimulants of any sort, to work hard, and to endure a sun which exhausted what little nervous energy was left us. We went down to the water, leaving the packs as before, at the top of the descent, which here is only two miles long, and drank excessively. The water seemed to do us some good; but as soon as we had walked a short distance from it, the thirst, and hunger, and faintness, came on again, and we went back to drink, time after time. We could not see a sign of game, except the same buffalo tracks, which spoke of the beasts having passed by, and migrated to the mouth of the river some days since. There was no spoor of wild beasts, or any signs of life, except a few doves, that we tried in vain to shoot, by cutting up a bullet into slugs: they were too wary for us.

After sundown, the cart came: the men had left three mules behind, that had lain down, and would go no further. Andersson, Timboo, and John St. Helena, took a hasty meal, and very pluckily went after them. They were absent two hours, but returned without the mules: who it seemed had got up again as the evening became cool, and had strayed, and were nowhere to be found. There were many old zebra tracks

about the plain, which are as like those of mules as can be, and in the night quite undistinguishable from them. As for the six mules that had arrived, they were, by Stewartson's advice, sent down into the river to eat and rest themselves all night. He assured me there would be little danger, that we had seen no tracks of wild animals to injure them, and, what was very true, they *must* have food. I think it was the most foolish thing that I was guilty of during the whole journey, to leave the poor animals to shift for themselves, two miles from us, and without the slightest protection; but I was new to the country, and thought it a far better plan to put myself under the entire guidance of my worthy friend, until I had gained some experience, than to make a mess of the whole thing by trying to manage for myself. I ought to have gone with two or three men to the river, and watched the mules whilst they fed for a couple of hours; then tied them up, and given them a good rest the next day. As it was, I slept in happy ignorance of the fate that awaited them.

In the morning I sent a man down to drive them up: he was a long time absent, and at last returned with piteous news. He had found no mules, but, instead of them, the tracks of several lions; and going on, he came to where he saw the tracks of all the mules going full gallop, and by the side of them those of the lions. A little further on he heard something in the bushes, and found my poor chestnut pack-mule half eaten, and a hyena devouring the remains of the carcase. At a short distance lay my largest horse, and a lion by

him; the lion looked so savage, and walked so slowly away, that my man crept up the rocks, and waited there for a long time, which accounted for his delay, and then ran back to tell us.

Andersson and myself took up our guns directly and ran down, and the others after us. We went to the chestnut mule—she had been left behind the night before, and her instinct led her to climb down to the river bed, into which she seems to have been watched, and seized by the lions the moment she got there. We then followed the tracks on to the dead horse, the mules and horses had all been galloping together: there were distinct tracks of six lions galloping by their side, and then had been the fatal spring, and the dead horse lay half eaten. The other lions gave over their pursuit after a few paces. We next followed the mule tracks until they lay sufficiently clear of one another for us to count them, and see whether any more besides the two animals we had seen were dead. I was delighted to find nine tracks; so that not only the six mules, that had drawn the cart, and the little horse were safe, but also the two remaining cart mules which had been left on the road had found out their fellows during the night, and joined them. I sent Timboo and another man to fetch them back, and the rest of us returned to cut off as much meat from the mule and the horse as we could eat or carry, for we were now without any animal food. We then climbed up the cliff that overhung the place where the mule lay, to hide it out of the way of the hyenas and jackals, until we were going back to the waggons.

We hunted about the whole day after the lions, but their spoors were lost among the rocks, and we could not see one of them. Andersson and I, therefore, determined to sit up and watch for them, as they were sure to return to the carcases in the night. There were two spots, where we might lie in wait; the one a camelthorn tree, about fifty yards from the mule, but with a most difficult trunk to climb, so thick and straight, that ropes would be necessary; the other, a ledge in the rock, at the very spot where we had been hiding the meat. The cliff rose abruptly above us—a man could easily climb it; but we agreed, in our innocence, that a lion could not. So, when the strayed mules and horses had been recovered in safety, we went to the cart, had our dinner, and brought down our warm coats and spare guns, as the evening closed in. Stewartson, with two or three hands, came with us to carry back the horse-meat. It became rapidly twilight, as the sun set behind the crags, throwing the deep gorge of the Swakop into shadow; and there was no time to be lost in getting down the meat and in choosing our positions, for the lions were due at nightfall. We walked quickly to the dead mule, and as we went, the men pointed out five or six deer, or something like them, that we could not clearly see, bounding along the rocks above us and parallel to us. We came to the place, the mule lay as we had left her. Andersson had gone to the other side of the river to reconnoitre something, and I left my guns, &c., at the bottom of the rock, with Stewartson and the men, and ran up to fetch the meat. I was busy

tugging out the last shoulder of my trusty steed, when the men called out, "Good God, sir, the lion's above you!" I *did* feel queer, but I did not drop the joint, I walked steadily down the rock, looking very frequently over my shoulder; but it was not till I came to where the men stood that I could see the round head and pricked ears of my enemy, peering over the ledge under which I had been at work. Stewartson made a very good shot at him, but too low, splintering the stones under his chin. It was far too dark for a good aim. It then appeared that the creatures we had thought were deer, were really the lions. It was now useless to lie out where we had intended, as the lions knew all about us, and proved to be far better rock-climbers than ourselves; and, as we could not get up the tree, we returned thoroughly out-generalled.

In the evening a waggon came down. It was *en route* from the Missionary station of Mr. Hahn to the Bay. The waggon driver had a small flock of slaughter sheep for his own consumption by the way; he kindly sold us two of them, which was all he could spare.

In the morning, with a heavy heart and diminished cavalcade, we proceeded onwards, sometimes Andersson and sometimes I rode—but I had much the most riding of the two. The next day one of my sheep had to be killed for meat—for some of the men had a most unaccountable prejudice against horse and mule flesh. The mule, I grant, was stringy, for she was old, and had done a great deal of work. But the horse was what butchers would describe as "prime."

September 25th.—We came to a water-hole in the sandy river bed, at a place where it was flanked with deep reeds. Stewartson had made us travel in the middle of the day, and right in the midst of the deep sand of the river—he seemed to have a most marvellous dread of lions, though at this season of the year night is the only fit time for travel, and I saw clearly that the mules were knocked up; indeed we only travelled three hours a day. There were lions roaring about us all night, and as there was a long reach of dry reeds, we set fire to it. It makes a glorious bonfire, frightens the wild beasts, and improves the pasturage very much.

26th.—Intensely hot. We passed some Rhinoceros spoors, and had a long chase after him, walking or running many miles, but without success; the chase, fortunately, led us parallel to our course, so that we regained the cart pretty easily. In the middle of the day we met some Ghou Damup, and persuaded four of them join us. I had a great curiosity about these natives. It was so peculiar to see Negroes speaking the language of a light-coloured race, the Hottentots, and that too in a far more northern part of Africa than Hottentots were believed to exist in. All published maps up to the last two or three years, place a dotted line no great distance north of the Orange River, with the remark, that that is the northern limit of the Hottentot race. Now not only were the Hottentots by Walfisch Bay natives in the country, but here were black people, a race living in amity with, but as inferiors to these very Hottentots, and also speaking

their language without any other of their own. It seemed that these Ghou Damup have a stronghold of their own, a large table-mountain, inaccessible except by one or two passes, which a white man in the country, by name Hans, of whom I shall have much to say by and by, had visited and gone up; he gave me a very interesting account of it. This mountain I had made Stewartson promise to accompany me to, to buy goats, after I had reached the Missionary station a-head. Now these very Ghou Damup belonged to it, and therefore we engaged them as guides. I found also the advantage of having natives to do the troublesome work, as carrying wood, watching cattle,—which they have an aptitude for, and which similar servants do not like, and cannot be spared to perform.

Erongo is the name of the mountain; it was described as two days' journey, either from hereabouts or from the next Missionary station (Otjimbinguè) that of Mr. Rath's. We had no difficulty in explaining our wants to the Ghou Damup, although Stewartson's vocabulary was extremely limited; few interjections, twenty or thirty substantives, and infinite gesticulation, are amply sufficient for a dexterous traveller to convey to an intelligent native his views and wishes on a marvellous variety of subjects.

My thermometers had been packed so carefully that I had never hitherto looked at them, but to-day it felt very hot, and I took them out. I could not have conceived the heat—143° in sun at three o'clock, and 95° in the shade. The poor mules cannot get on through the horrible sand. Andersson very nearly had a

sun-stroke. I found him very ill, and with a racking headache, under a tree to which he had staggered—it was the only shade near—and a very lucky chance for him that he reached it. In a quarter of an hour he was able to ride on, but was extremely poorly for the evening.

We slept at the mouth of the Tsobis River bed, and eat our last meal of animal food. We had shot nothing, not even fired at game in the Swakop. The days passed by rather heavily, for we were not yet acclimated, but out of health and fevered. The least cut or scratch festered, and we were not fit for much exertion. Stewartson told us innumerable anecdotes of events in the country since he had resided there. He showed me all the points of an ox; explained how immeasurably superior that beast was in every respect to a horse—a fact which I cannot endorse—and every now and then gave me a mount. My first impression in riding an ox was, that the saddle was ungirthed, for his skin is so loose, that hold on as you will, it is impossible to be as steady as on horseback. I hated the animal's horns; they were always annoying the rider or somebody else, but nevertheless are dearly prized by Hottentots as an ornament. I learnt it would cast infinite ridicule upon me, in their eyes, if when I had ride-oxen of my own, I should saw off their tips. The footfall of an ox is peculiarly soft.

My men, I was glad to see, worked together pretty amicably, but there was no one amongst them with sufficient influence over the rest to be made into a head servant. John Morta, who had far the most

character of them all, was unfitted to head the others, from his ignorance of oxen and horses, and the whole of that very work that I especially wanted a head servant to undertake for me; I therefore made him cook and housekeeper, and gave him the principal charge of the stores. Timboo had attached himself to me from the first, as henchman and valet-de-chambre —that is to say, if I called out for anything, he would not let anybody but himself bring it—and he made my bed and saddled my horse, and so forth. I had intended Gabriel for that sort of work, but the poor lad was quite bewildered and frightened. He was also a great scamp. In Cape Town he had been the most impudent, self-possessed, and good-looking of young rogues, but the hard work and sense of anxiety quite dashed his spirits and his assurance, and he had relapsed into a timid frightened boy, and used to talk to the men in a piteous way about his mother. Listening to the conversation of the men at our bivouacs, I was quite shocked at the low tone of honour that pervaded it, and yet they must be taken as above the average of the working class in Cape Town. They were perpetually talking of the prison there, which they literally seemed to consider as a kind of club or head quarters, where a person had an excellent opportunity of meeting his friends and of forming fresh intimacies, but where he was at the same time subjected to considerable inconvenience. They positively reckoned dates by the epochs in which either they or their mutual friends had been confined. They had no shame in alluding to these matters, even when I was

joining in the conversation—in fact, the gaol was the chief thing that they talked about. I have no doubt that if, as an amusement, I had proposed that each man should tell a story, the beginning would usually have been—"When I was in prison," &c. &c. This feature in their character corroborated the suspicion of pilfering that I had entertained. But I soon saw that some were very far worse than the others, and I determined to take the first opportunity of weeding these out. I especially mistrusted one man, whom I believe to have been a regular gaol bird, and who had the worst of influence over the rest. John Morta's most perfect honesty, through any temptation, I was assured of, and though I had had less opportunity of observing him, I fully believed in Timboo's. I only wanted to get rid of two men, and to replace them if I could, and then I had hopes I should get on very well with the others.

Our seventh day's march was an affair of six hours, and up the Tsobis river bed. For the second time, we had no animal food left; but immediately that we started we saw the fresh spoor of a giraffe. I doubted whether or no to go after it, as my horse was very thin and weak, and I could not tell where the giraffe might have gone to, probably far beyond reach; so we travelled slowly on. However, as I rode some little distance in front of the cart, I found that the track went straight up the river bed, which being now hemmed in with impracticable cliffs, the giraffe's path and our own must necessarily be the same. This made a great alteration in the case, and I cantered slowly on the spoor. My rifle was a little one (only

36 bore), but loaded with steel-pointed bullets. I was afraid of losing all chance of a shot if I wasted time by returning to the cart and getting a larger gun, and therefore I went on, as much for the pot as the sport. After four hours' travel, during which I had kept a couple of miles in front of the rest of the party, so as to be well away from the sound of the whip and of the men's talking, the tracks turned sharp to the right, up a broad ascent, which there led out of the river, and in the middle of this, among some bushes, and under a camelthorn tree stood my first giraffe. I took immediate advantage of a bush, and galloped under its cover as hard as I could pelt, and was within one hundred yards before the animal was fairly off. I galloped on, but she was almost as fast as I, and the bushes, which she trampled cleverly through, annoyed my horse extremely; I therefore reined up, and gave her a bullet in her quarter, which handicapped her heavily, and took some three miles an hour out of her speed. Again I galloped, loading as I went, but excessively embarrassed by the bushes, and fired again, whilst galloping, at thirty yards' distance, and I believe missed the animal. The riding at that time was really difficult, and my horse shied very much. Again I loaded, but my horse was becoming blown, and I rode parallel to the beast, intending to overtake and confront her. There was a watercourse in the way, quite jumpable, but my poor beast made a mess of it, and chested the opposite side; yet I somehow got him over, and then rode with all the skill I could. At last I steadily gained on the giraffe, then beat her,

and passed her. The giraffe obstinately made for her point. I was forty yards in advance, and pulled up full in her path. She came on: my horse was far too blown to fidget, and was standing with his four legs well out. I waited as long as I dare—too long, I think, for her head was almost above me when I fired, and she really seemed coming at me with vice. I put my bullet full in her face: she tossed her head back, and the blood streamed from her nostril as she turned and staggered, slowly retracing her path. I dare not fire again, lest I should fail in killing her, and only excite her to another run, which my horse was not fit to engage in. I therefore rode slowly after the wounded beast, and I drove her back to near where she came from, and there she stopped under a high tree. My horse was now frightened, and would not let me take my aim for the finishing blow at the brain, as it is but a small mark to shoot at; so I got off, and the unhappy creature looked down at me with her large lustrous eyes, and I felt that I was committing a kind of murder, but for all that, I was hungry, and she must die; so I waited till she turned her head, and then dropped her with a shot.

There was now a fine holiday feast for us. When the party came up, we set to work flaying and cutting large steaks from the meat, and securing the marrow-bones, until as much was heaped on the cart as the mules could possibly struggle on with. Our Ghou Damup guides ran on to Tsobis, where many of their people lay, and who brought us six ostrich eggs and sweet gum, in return for the meat we had left behind.

We now emerged from the deep gorges and high cliffs that for so long a time had shut us in, and could breathe more freely in the open country that lay about us. We had left the arid Naanip plain behind, and were arrived to where thorn-bushes and scanty grass overspread the sandy country. Fantastically peaked rocks rose on every side, and huge masses of mountains, that indicated the course of the Swakop, made a grand succession of distances; but there was a want, even painfully felt, of life in the landscape. The grass was withered, the bushes stunted and sear. No birds could be seen or heard; and every feature looked still and dead, under that most saddening of lights, a blazing sun in an unclouded sky.

September 28th.—We rested a day, to have a really good breakfast and dinner. I have read in some old-fashioned books of fiction, entitled "Natural History," that an ostrich egg would feed six men; but I know that Stewartson, Andersson, and myself, finished one very easily for breakfast, before beginning upon the giraffe. I confess, however, that we enjoyed the blessing of a good appetite.

My mules had become sadly distressed: one was very ill; he had nearly been drowned when landed at Walfisch Bay, and never recovered the accident; he was therefore seldom harnessed, but was driven along with any other mule that I might be anxious to spare. I tried harnessing my horse once, but his pace and step were so different to those of his comrades, that the work was too much for him.

We were now only two days' journey from the

missionary station Otjimbinguè, in which a man of the name of Hans Larsen was now encamped (he who had been to Erongo), of whom I had heard very much, and whom I had been most strongly urged by Mr. Bam to engage in my service, if I could do so, as he was excellently qualified to take charge of my expedition. My own waggon-men were very thoughtless and careless in their duty, and wanted strict overseering. Hans had been in the service of two cattle-dealers, who successively had ruined themselves by their speculations. He had received payment of his wages partly in goods and partly in cattle, and was now living about the country an independent man, shooting, enjoying the possession of his cattle, and doing odd jobs for the missionaries. He intended to drive his stock down to Cape Town as soon as the rains had set in, and to make what money he could by them. Hans had originally been a sailor, but begged to leave a ship that he had become disgusted with, and was allowed to do so at Walfisch Bay, where he entered into the service of the traders I mentioned above. Having been seven years living about the Swakop, he had had very many adventures there; and as it appeared subsequently, had utterly shot off all the game in it. As it was very doubtful if the mules could struggle on much further, we determined, if they came to a stand-still, to send on for Hans.

The first day's journey from Tsobis was got through pretty well, but on the second the mules and cart came to a dead lock, in a broad sandy tributary of the Swakop, that we had to cross. We rode on to

Otjimbinguè, found Hans, who went directly back with oxen and yokes, and, before sundown, we were all encamped on the Swakop, at the Missionary station of Otjimbinguè. But now there was this difference, that no more yellow faces of Hottentots were about us, as at Walfisch Bay, but we had come among the negroes—the Damaras—and a country that was, in a certain sense, generally habitable, stretched before us instead of a sand-desert.

CHAPTER III.

Hear ill news.—Engage Hans.—Ride to Barmen.—En route.—Oxen *versus* Mules.—Arrive at Barmen.—Jonker's Attack.—Previous History.—Oerlams and Europeans.—Hottentots and Bushmen.—Establishment of Missions.—Native Feuds.—Dislike to Missions.—Obstruction to Travellers.—Write to Jonker.—Buy Oxen from Hans.—Breaking them in.—Attacks of Distemper.—Complete my Encampment.—Damara Digging.—Native Hunting.—Oxen sent to the Bay.—I go to Barmen.—Damara Thorn Trees.—Jonker writes to me.—My Plans.—The Ovampo.—First Rain.—Hottentot Beauties.—Hyena's Insolence.—Damara Ferocity.—Cruel Murder.—Mutilated Victim.—Message to Chiefs.—Their Replies.

OTJIMBINGUÈ is well situated for a Missionary station. Water, the first necessary of life, is here in sufficient quantity, as a small streamlet runs down the bed of the river. Grass, the next essential in the eyes of a pastoral people like the Damaras, is also in abundance, for the Swakop, at this place, instead of lying between abrupt cliffs, runs through a wide plain, that shelves for miles down its bed; and which, though covered with thorn bushes, affords a fair allowance of grass-bearing soil. The mission-house was a temporary affair, a mud wall six feet high, and over it a round-tented ceiling of matwork, in shape like a waggon roof. A gigantic house was being built by Mr. Rath, the missionary, on the top of a little cliff close by. Mr.

Rath and his wife received me with great kindness, and as this place, or its neighbourhood, was to be my head-quarters for some time, I chose my encampment with some deliberation. It was among a group of fine trees, and close by a good spring of water. The natives about the station were excessively annoying and troublesome, and I was strongly inclined to make an example of some of them; but I still followed a pacific policy. When my encampment had been planned, and the tent pitched, and bushes placed in a wide circle round the cart, I went to spend the evening with the missionary, and to hear the news of the country. The first intelligence shocked me very much; it was, that quite recently the neighbouring Namaqua Hottentots had attacked Schmelen's Hope (three long days' journey ahead), had murdered and mutilated the Damaras that lived there, and, naturally enough, terrified the resident missionary into leaving the place. The cause of this outrage, as far as I could learn, was simply savage barbarism, a little robbery, and a demonstration of dislike to the missionary cause.

I mentioned, at the beginning of the book, the name of Jonker Africaner, as the most important man among the Hottentots; it was he who headed the expedition.

The effect of this attack, which had occurred after a long peace or pause from fighting, was to frighten every Damara who had cattle to lose, into the far interior, so that hardly an ox was grazing within two days' journey north of the Swakop, and to seriously alarm the missionaries, who had hitherto depended on

these very Hottentots for protection from Damara insult. The Damaras that I saw were paupers who had no cows—people who chiefly lived, not on milk, but on roots like pig-nuts, and who collected round a white man with a vague hope of protection from him against their countrymen.

I determined to start immediately for Barmen, the head seat of intelligence as regards Damara and Hottentot movements, and called upon Hans, the next morning, to get, not horsed, but "oxed," for the journey. I found him in the neatest of encampments, with an old sail stretched in a sailor-like way to keep the sun off, and in an enclosure of thick reeds, that were cut and hedged all round. The floor was covered with sheep-skin mats: shooting things, knick-knacks, and wooden vessels were hung on the forked branches of the sticks, that propped up the whole. A very intelligent English lad was acting as his "help." Natives squatted round at a respectful distance, and Hans sat on an ottoman, looking like a Mogul. I had some conversation with him, and saw at once that he was not only willing to accompany me, but that also he was the very man I wanted. I had heard but one opinion of his efficiency and honesty from the Europeans that I had seen, which satisfied me on those points, and the style of the man was exactly what I desired, for he was quiet, sedate, but vigorous and powerfully framed, showing in all his remarks the shrewdest common sense, and evidently, from the order around him, an excellent disciplinarian. We very soon came to terms, which were, that he should go

with me to Barmen on trial, and that, if we suited, I would employ him as head servant. I was strongly urged to make a good enclosure (kraal) for mules and men, as the lions were extremely numerous about the low ground, in which I had encamped, for the sake of the shade, though they seldom prowled upon the bare cliff on which Hans and the Damara huts were scattered. I therefore collected all the natives together that I could, and set vigorously to work, cutting down all the bushes I could find, to strengthen my kraal with, and two days passed very busily. I then left Andersson in charge, and rode on with Stewartson and Hans towards Barmen, in the afternoon of the second day. Our little caravan consisted entirely of Hans' animals, for all of mine required rest; besides our ride-oxen, we had one ox packed and one loose, three sheep, and two Damaras; our pace was a jog trot, and the Damaras drove the sheep and two oxen in front, while we rode behind and drove on the Damaras. We off-packed after three hours, but it was dark when we did so, and the sheep ran loose and we could not drive them in together; one ran quite away, and was eaten, I presume, by the hyenas, who disturbed us a good deal; one we killed, and the other we tied to a bush. Hans made me a much more comfortable bed than I had previously enjoyed, showing me how to cut the bushes and make a dead hedge of them; then he smoothed the ground, and plucking dry grass, strewed it thickly about; upon that he laid two or three sheepskins, over them my mackintosh, and, lastly, my eider-down quilt. This

had become torn to rags by the thorns, and I intended on the first opportunity to get a caross instead of it. Sheepskins and carosses are no incumbrance in travelling with pack oxen, for they are carefully placed under the saddle-bags, and their use in keeping the animal's back from being galled is more than compensation for their weight. I listened with much interest to Hans' tales and anecdotes. He had been the most successful sportsman in the country, and had lived the last two or three years in sole charge of an immense drove of oxen, once amounting to 700, with only one or two native lads to help him in the care of them. He had shot a great many lions out of the Swakop, six in the preceding year, and made it a much safer place than it used to be, to drive cattle in. From his account, that river bed must have swarmed with game, when it was first seen by Europeans, but I can easily fancy, from the confined character of the country, how in a short time one or two guns would entirely exterminate them.

In the morning our remaining sheep could not be driven; he was too scared, and as time was much more precious than mutton, we killed him, took out his inside, and strapped him across one of the oxen with hardly any delay. I was well mounted on an old ox, and really liked his walking pace very much. I think I can sit more hours on oxback than on horseback, supposing in both cases the animals to walk. An ox's jog-trot is not very endurable, but anything faster abominable. The peculiarity of the creature is, that he will not go alone, from his disposition being so very

gregarious. He is distressed beyond expression, when any attempt succeeds for a time in separating him from the herd. It is with great difficulty that an ox can be found willing to go ahead of the others, even though he knows that his fellows are just behind him. Whipping and spurring has hardly any effect on the animal: he feels every cut most sensitively, as the rider cannot but be aware of; but the obstinacy of his nature is so wonderfully great, that pain has little or no influence upon his determination. His character is totally different from that of a horse, and very curious to observe; he is infinitely the more sagacious of the two, but never free from vice. The gregariousness of oxen and of sheep is of great advantage to the traveller; for it is not necessary to be perpetually counting the animals, to see if any have strayed; and at night, when the oxen are all loose about him, a constant anxiety is taken off the owner's mind, by knowing that if he sees one, all are there. My mules had given me a great deal of trouble, by requiring much more watching than the oxen; and I hardly know how I could have travelled with a large drove of those animals. I should not dare to let them be loose at night; and the country seldom affords enough trees to tether them to.

We made a tedious ride to-day, taking something to eat at noon, and going on in the evening. I began to see that being able to endure severe exertion for half the day without the breakfast we always have in England, was essential to our sort of life. At first it is very trying. In temperate climates it is easy

enough; but in tropical ones, when you begin work in the fresh cool of the morning, and become hungry and exhausted at the very time that the sun is beginning to blaze most powerfully, the want of a restorative is more particularly felt. It is impossible in practice to ensure breakfast before you start; and constantly, when you least expect it, a series of accidents occur that keep you mounted, and put it off till two or three o'clock in the afternoon; but coffee, so long as you have any, can always be made before starting.

We passed over very broken ground, and slept under some magnificent camelthorn trees: the meat we killed in the morning seemed a little tainted; so we cooked as much as we could in our iron pot, to prevent it from becoming worse, and gave all the rest to our two or three natives for a grand feast. The evening of the next day found us at Barmen, which, if I was to avoid the Hottentots, would probably be the starting-point of my exploring expedition. Mr. Hahn, a Russian by birth, and married to an English lady, and a missionary of considerable influence, was the founder of this station.

Mr. Kolbe and his young wife, who had been attacked by the Hottentots at Schmelen's Hope, had come here for refuge. They had lost nearly everything. It seems they had quite recently occupied the place, and that the poorer natives had settled in great numbers by them. Kahikenè, one of the four or five principal chiefs in Damara-land, had also trecked there with many of his men and large herds of cattle. He

had always behaved in a very friendly way to the missionaries; but this was the first time that either he, or any of the influential Damaras, had encamped within easy reach of a mission station. Kahikenè showed no distrust, but lived in the friendliest relations with Mr. and Mrs. Kolbe; and they had sincerely hoped by his means to get a firmer footing than they then had in Damara-land. Just at this time, one night a troop of mounted Hottentots galloped up to the place, firing at and murdering all they could catch. Kahikenè narrowly escaped; the Hottentots scoured the country in every direction, and a most fearful night was passed. In the early morning, Jonker came reeling drunk to the mission-house, ordered the door to be unbarred, and behaved in the coolest way,—demanded some breakfast, and so forth; and then departed with his men, and the oxen, and what else they had robbed. It is very difficult to find out how many people are killed or wounded in occasions like these, as hyenas soon devour the dead bodies, and those who survive scatter in all directions; so that no clue remains towards the numbers missing. I saw two poor women, one with both legs cut off at her ankle joints, and the other with one. They had crawled the whole way on that eventful night from Schmelen's Hope to Barmen, some twenty miles. The Hottentots had cut them off after their usual habit, in order to slip off the solid iron anklets that they wear. These wretched creatures showed me how they had stopped the blood, by poking the wounded stumps into the sand. A European would certainly have

bled to death under such circumstances. One of Jonker's sons, a hopeful youth, came to a child that had been dropped on the ground, and who lay screaming there, and he leisurely gouged out its eyes with a small stick.

I had no reason to think that this outrage on Mr. Kolbe's station was any worse than the usual attacks that the Hottentots and Damaras make upon one another; but the Damaras are savages, and are not supposed to know better, while Jonker is a British subject, born in the colony, and his best men are British subjects too. Missionaries and teachers in great numbers have been amongst them, or their fathers, for years and years; and the home of these people, though now they have trecked on to the tropics, is properly on the borders of the Orange River.

I was very anxious to obtain something like an authentic history of these Hottentots, and of the Damaras, during the last few years, and I begged Mr. Hahn, who was eminently qualified to give me one, to do so; and as it will illustrate my story I will now give its substance, mixed up and corrected with what I have since gathered from various quarters, or made out for myself.

The agents in this history are Namaqua "Oerlams," or Namaquas born, in or near the colony, often having Dutch blood and a good deal of Dutch character in their veins. Among these, Jonker is a chief. The Namaqua "Hottentots" look at these Oerlams with great jealousy, and consider them almost as aliens; they do not

approve of their intelligence and mixed blood, but nevertheless make common cause with them against the Damaras.

It must be recollected that Hottentots are yellow, and not at all black. I could pick out many complexions far fairer than that of my own sunburnt face among them. But the Damaras are quite dark, though their features are good and seldom of the negro type. Oerlam was a nickname given by Dutch colonists to the Hottentots that hung about their farms; it means a barren ewe—a creature good neither for breeding nor fattening, a worthless concern, one that gives trouble and yields no profit. However all things are relative, and what these Oerlams were to the Dutchmen, that the Namaqua Hottentots are to the Oerlams.

The Europeans that have visited the country between the latitudes of Angra Pequana and Barmen, are some ten missionaries, the same number of traders, five or six runaway sailors, who have acted as servants to these, and two travelling parties besides my own. The first was that of Sir James Alexander, who explored this country upwards from the Orange River fifteen or twenty years ago, and whom the traders and missionaries followed; the other was that of Mr. Ruxton, the well-known American traveller, who sailed to Walfisch Bay, but was prevented by the traders that were there from entering further into the land, and who had to return in the same ship that brought him. There is no difference whatever between the Hottentot and the Bushman, who lives wild about the hills in this part of Africa, whatever may have been said or

written on the subject. The Namaqua Hottentot is simply the reclaimed and somewhat civilised Bushman, just as the Oerlams represent the same raw material under a slightly higher degree of polish. Not only are they identical in features and language, but the Hottentot tribes have been, and continue to be, recruited from the Bushmen. The largest tribe of these Namaqua Hottentots, those under Cornelius, and who muster now 1000 guns, have almost all of them lived the life of Bushmen. In fact, a savage loses his name, "Saen," which is the Hottentot word, as soon as he leaves his Bushman's life and joins one of the larger tribes, as those at Walfisch Bay have done; and therefore when I say Oerlam Hottentot or Bushman, the identically same yellow, flat-nosed, woolly-haired, clicking individual must be conjured up before the mind of my kind reader, but differing in dirt, squalor, and nakedness, according to the actual term employed; the very highest point of the scale being a creature who has means of dressing himself respectably on Sundays and gala-days, and who knows something of reading and writing; the lowest point, a regular savage.

Of the very smallest tribe of Bushmen I met none in my travels.

The Oerlams, then, some thirty years since, were near the Orange River, and Jonker was a chief of secondary importance amongst them. He fought his way into notoriety, and with success his little tribe received fresh recruits. The Namaqua Hottentots asked his assistance in attacking their northern

neighbours, the Damaras, the pretext being constant quarrels, the ill-treatment that their kindred the Bushmen were receiving throughout the country, and last, not least, the fine herds of oxen that only waited to be plundered. Jonker accordingly trecked up, helped the Hottentots, and then settled alongside of them. His tribe now became larger and more efficient; he bought guns and horses from the Cape with the oxen that he stole, and continued robbing the Damaras on his own account.

In consequence of a representation sent by Sir James Alexander to two Missionary societies, stations were formed at Jonker's head quarters; and, in 1840, he had been so far influenced, that he agreed to leave the Damaras at rest, and to take care that the other Hottentots should do the same, for he had become by far the most important chief among them all. The way in which peace was made and kept for three years was highly creditable to the missionaries concerned in it; a great deal of trade was carried on in Jonker's werft. A blacksmith's shop was put up there, and iron things, assegais, choppers for cutting wood, beads, and so forth, were made in great quantities and sold for cattle, which again were exchanged with traders from the Cape for clothes, guns, and such like things. But this did not long last; the traders sold their goods on credit; Jonker and the others became deeply in debt, and as the only way of paying it off involved themselves once again in the endless Damara quarrels. It appeared that one Damara chief and his tribe had been invited to a feast, and when these were attacked, and nearly

all killed, Jonker after much persuasion got a commando together to revenge the injured party, and started. Once on a raid, the Hottentots did not much care whom they attacked, and began by robbing a werft under Kasheua, who had nothing to do with the matter in question, drove off their cattle, and rode after the natives—men, women, and children, shooting them down in all directions; this he repeated elsewhere till a large herd of cattle were brought together, and then he returned. Cornelius's tribe of Hottentots hearing of Jonker's success, followed his example; they rode in a friendly way to one of Kahikenè's villages, (Mr. Kolbe's friend at Schmelen's Hope) and as the Damaras were employed in bringing them milk after the usual fashion, they attacked them and massacred all they could. From this time up to the Schmelen's Hope affair, nothing else had occurred but fightings and retaliations between the Namaquas and Damaras.

I have the details in full of many of them, but they are all alike, with little more than the name and place varied. The consequence is, that although the Namaquas have no trade whatever with the Damaras, a steady export of Damara oxen goes on southwards to our colony in droves of from 200 to 800 head of cattle, which are bought here with far too little inquiry as to how they have been obtained. In fact I am assured in every quarter that of late years the news of a trader's waggon being on the road has been the signal for a general raid upon the Damaras.

Jonker had up to the present time acted very fairly, but rather despotically to all the whites. He had

always protected their persons and property, and had often stood their friend against the other Hottentots. Even the Damara missionaries were greatly indebted to him for the security they enjoyed; for the belief was, that any harm done to them would be instantly retaliated by the much-dreaded horsemen of the Hottentots. But Jonker liked to have his own way, and soon became heartily tired of advice and admonition; and more lately his plundering disposition and that of the Hottentots had become so thoroughly roused, that the rebuking presence of the missionaries was felt to be extremely irksome and galling, and he constantly expressed his determination to rid himself of them. Still they entertained no personal cause for alarm, but the attack on Schmelen's Hope had placed the matter on a different footing, and their position was become avowedly very perilous.

The Damaras, from their suspicious nature, always believed the missionaries and other white people to be merely a species of Hottentot, and acting as spies to Jonker. They argue thus,—"You come and go without harm, passing through their country; you must therefore be as one of their people;" and now that the Damaras had been killed all round Mr. Kolbe, and he himself not murdered, they firmly believed that he went there merely as a decoy to bring Kahikenè within Jonker's reach. There was nothing revolting in such a line of conduct in the Damara mind, for they seem to have no perceptible notion of right and wrong, but it was considered to be a simple fact, and as such they acted upon it, by entirely gutting the Schmelen's

to house the instant that Mr. and Mrs. Kolbe had their hurried retreat from that place to Barmen.

Jonker had never, even when on the best terms with the whites, permitted any of them to enter Damara-land; the traders were peremptorily refused permission to go there; and more lately, when Mr. Hahn had got everything in readiness at Barmen to explore the interior, a troop of men were sent who drove away all his ride, pack, and waggon oxen, and detained them till the season for travelling was gone by; the reason being, that if a free intercourse were established between the whites and Damara-land, the Damaras would soon buy guns and weapons, which would place them on more equal terms with the Hottentots. It can easily then be conceived with what temper Jonker and the others had heard of my landing, and intention to explore; a plan of sending men down to Walfisch Bay, and to cut me off there, was, as I found out afterwards, publicly discussed. Help or countenance from the Damaras was the last thing I could expect, for they would treat me as a Hottentot, and again, my men were so totally undisciplined and devoid of pluck, and had already cast back so many longing regrets towards the Cape, that I felt that the least check, in the first instance, to my success would dash the whole enterprise.

At the Cape my plans had already been thwarted by the emigrant Boers, who chose to cut off all communication with the north by the one side of the Karrikarri desert; and here were the Oerlams, their offset as it were, trying to do the same on the other.

The cases were as similar as could be; both parties were guided by British subjects,—both were effectually barring out civilisation and commerce from Central Africa, and what I felt most peculiarly vexatious, both were barring out *me*.

Now when I was in Cape Town there was a very general feeling that the interior of South Africa would become an extensive and open field for colonial commerce; since the discovery of Lake 'Ngami had shown a way to it. Hence it was doubly annoying that the emigrant Boers, whose treatment of the blacks was not very many shades better than that of the Oerlams, should not only keep us from these countries, but also generate a hatred on the part of the blacks against white faces, which years of intercourse on our part might not efface. His excellency the Governor, guided by these views, took advantage of my intended expedition, and also of Mr. Oswell's, who was then in the neighbourhood of Lake 'Ngami, by formally requesting each of us to establish "friendly relations" on the part of the Cape Government with the black tribes who were subject to the attacks of these marauders. We were simply to convey expressions of good will and strong assurances that the proceedings of the Boers met with no countenance on the part of the colony. I, therefore, knowing that Jonker still felt some fear of and respect for the Cape Government, wrote him a long letter in legible characters, which I was assured could be deciphered by some of his people. I told him how much displeasure the emigrant Boers had caused,—that his actions were as bad as theirs,—and

that therefore he would probably be regarded with the same displeasure as they, if he persisted in attacking the Damaras now that he had been warned. I ended with an assurance that I should call the Damara chiefs together, and express to them what I had been requested to do in the case of the nations threatened by the emigrant Boers.

After I had written my letter in English, I had it translated into simple Dutch, and written on a magnificent sheet of paper, and, finding a messenger, sent it by him to Jonker, who lived fifty miles off, under a high range of hills which was distinctly visible from Barmen.

Mr. Hahn spoke highly of Hans, and strongly advised me not only to take him into my service, but also to buy up his stock of oxen and sheep, as it would save me infinite trouble; and this I did. I paid him, by cheque on Cape Town, 71*l.* for fifty oxen and a hundred sheep and goats. Of these about fifteen were more or less trained, and two or three were ride-oxen. It was the best bargain I could possibly have made, for a month's barter among the Damaras would never have bought so many. The poverty of the land began to strike me, and the extreme inconvenience of having no currency, which makes bartering a very different matter from buying at a shop. I was grieved, too, to find that very many of my articles of exchange were ill-chosen and worthless, and also that I should require a very large troop of slaughter oxen, as hardly any game seemed to exist in this part of the country.

I only staid one whole day at Barmen, and then returned to my cart at Otjimbinguè, riding the sixty

miles between the two places in a day and a half, which is very fair travelling for an ox.

I found everything in order under Andersson's management. I heard that the night I left them some lions were roaring in the most awful manner close round the encampment. They seemed to be trying to get at the mules, who luckily did not break loose. The men were excessively frightened, as well they might be, for they could see nothing in the dark night, and the lions could at any moment have leaped over the slight fence into the midst of them. The morning showed their spoors, as they had crawled round, and close to the bushes that made the fence.

Hans was now formally installed in his office, and the breaking-in of the new oxen for the waggons began. Yokes were borrowed from the missionary, and a heavy tree felled for the animals to draw. The first ox that we lassoed by the leg was very vicious: he threw himself down, and broke his thigh-bone, and I had to shoot him. The next sprained his ankle, and then got savage, and chased everybody, running upon three legs. He at length took refuge among some thick dabby bushes, which were thronged with hornets, and, what between the mad charges of the animal and the stings of the hornets, we were fairly beaten off, and had to leave him the whole day by himself.

This was a bad beginning; but after infinite labour three or four were inspanned: they were caught, then made fast between two tame oxen, and there yoked. The same operation was repeated for a few days; but we did not make much progress, the animals

were so very fresh and vicious. It must be recollected that Damara cattle are far wilder animals than those we see in England, and infinitely more difficult to break in. There is a game-like and thorough-bred look about them. Many of them will face and charge a lion, as a buffalo would. My ride ox, Frieschland, who had once been badly scratched and bitten, became furious if he heard a lion's cry near him. Hans suggested driving them down to the Bay, and then, when a little tired by the journey, and accustomed to having a number of white men about them, they would be more submissive; I decided on trying this plan, and an early day was fixed for the start.

In the meantime we had ceased to stare at the strangeness of our new friends, the Damaras. Numbers came to my kraal every day, to look in at us in a friendly manner, and to see if there was anything for them to pilfer. Timboo began to make himself intelligible to them, and was quite delighted at each word or phrase that he found to be the same as in his own language.

The mules and horses were just recovering their condition, when that fatal scourge, the distemper, broke out amongst them. First one fine mule was found to be ill, and to stand with difficulty; a little froth gathered about his nose and mouth; in an hour he was lying on the ground, and in another hour dead. I was distressed beyond measure, as I knew the disease would not rest with him; neither did it,—two more mules were infected, and died also; but my last horse still was in good health. He gave me one good gallop

after a giraffe. I saw him far off, coming down the long slope on the other side of the river, and cantered round him. As I got nearer and rode gently, I passed two other individuals, each stalking the same beast; one was my faithful Hans, and the other, a brute of a lion. I galloped up to the giraffe, and put a large bullet through his ribs, which sickened him at once. I then rode in front of him, as he slowly kept on his road at a pace between a walk and a trot; but when I began to re-load, I found to my intense disgust, that my powder-horn had jolted out of my pocket. I could not turn the giraffe; he forged steadily on at about seven miles an hour, and, as the evening was closing in, I had to leave him to go where he pleased. I offered a good reward for my powder flask, which I could not easily spare; and men, women, and boys ran off the next day on my horse's spoor, and found it. I never carried a powder-flask loose in my pocket again. Other Damaras followed, and got my giraffe for themselves.

In return for the meat of the dead mules, the Damaras worked at strengthening my kraal, building me a hut in it, and digging a well. I had logs of wood or branches of trees planted upright in the ground at intervals all round, and plenty of dabby bushes wattled in between them. I made a good gate to the whole; for I wished to feel, that when Timboo, John Morta, and I remained behind, and the rest of the party were gone down to the Bay to fetch the waggons, I might have a place of security agaist pilferers and night marauders.

When the holes had to be dug for planting the uprights, I was infinitely amused at the adroitness with which the Damaras made them. I should have used spades, and, in default of those, I really do not know what I should have done, but the natives each took a common stick, pointed at one end, and, holding it like a dagger, broke up the ground with it; they then scratched out the loose earth with their left hand, working in this way until holes were burrowed deeper than the elbow, and only some six inches in diameter. Savages have so many occasions for scratching up the ground, as in digging for deep roots, for water, when the wells are partly choked up, and such like, that the Damaras often carry a stick for the purpose among their arrows, in their quiver. The Bushmen do the same, and this method of digging is called in Dutch patois "crowing" the ground; thus, "crow-water," means water that you have to crow for, and not an open well, or spring.

To return to my horse; the day arrived when he was doomed, and the fatal distemper made him its last victim. It appears that distemper is most fatal in the months of September, October, and November, and that it generally ceases with the first rains. The Hottentots were hardly able to contend with it at first, but by degrees places were found in the Hottentot country, one on a high table-mountain, where the sickly season could be passed by them in safety; some few horses had had the distemper and recovered, and these were kept at hand. Jonker had always a few of these about him. The exchange price of a horse

among the Hottentots here is from eight to ten oxen, but they were hardly ever sold, as a horse is invaluable for marauding purposes. Cattle cannot be swept off by a few men without their aid, for as soon as the attack is made, the oxen run off in all directions, and it is quite out of the power of a man on foot to overtake and turn them, but they are quite at the mercy of a few horsemen.

There were large herds of zebras about, that came down nearly every afternoon to drink, but I soon gave over trying to shoot them. It here required a very long stalk, as the broad open river-bed had first to be crossed; and there were four or five hangers-on about the place with their guns, who would run down and have their shots; besides these, there were savages with their bows and arrows. Often, after an hour's hard and careful manœuvring, the game was seen to be startled, and a ball from a zealous sportsman was whizzing at them from some ridiculous distance. The captain of the werft made good and steady bags of game with his bow and arrows, getting a zebra about every other day; but then he had to slave at it, and often follow the wounded animal's spoor for great distances. The lions also killed several, and they supplied the natives pretty well. The Damaras were always on the look-out, and, guided by the vultures, appropriated in the morning whatever beasts the lions had left half eaten.

I employed myself in breaking-in my remaining mules to carry packs and saddles; they were too few now to draw my cart, but use might be made of

them in some other way. They were troublesome, sensible creatures, not kicking at random, but always with an aim. We had several tumbles, but succeeded in teaching them the elements of their duty.

It is much more difficult to break-in animals in the open country than it is in an enclosure, because, when you let them go, which you cannot help doing sometimes, they gallop off, and it takes a very long time, often an hour, and plenty of running, to turn and catch them again; besides this, each chase scares and frightens them all the more.

Eight days had now passed since I had returned from Barmen, and a fortnight since the cart first arrived here, in Otjimbinguè. The time had been spent pretty actively, a great deal had been learnt, one very bad character weeded from among my men, and on the evening of the ninth day all the party, except Timboo, John Morta, and myself, went down under the care of Andersson to the waggons. They took all the oxen and a sufficiency of slaughter sheep with them, the remainder being in charge of John Allen, the English lad whom I found living with Hans, and doing work for him. John Allen was not yet in my service, but I engaged him afterwards; he was a most trustworthy, hard-working clever lad, and originally a sailor. There was now no anxiety about the food and safety of the Bay party, for Hans knew every inch of the road, and was thoroughly *au fait* in all that related to oxen; but I did anticipate with much fear that the animals would never be broken-in within any reasonable time. Everybody prophesied ill; but they had

done so from the beginning, and I felt convinced that the hardest part of the journey, the first step, was over. I now had an establishment of oxen and men, and a few good servants amongst them, and it was precisely in possessing myself of an establishment that my great difficulty had lain.

There was a ride-ox for every man that went to the Bay, and they trotted off on the evening of October 17th. Stewartson went back with them. I was very sorry to part with him, as he had been an amusing comrade and of great service to me. My proposed expedition to Erongo had therefore to be postponed, and I determined to go there on Hans's return.

I now lived in great part at Mr. Rath's house, copying his dictionary of Damara words, and hearing the results of his observations on the people. Timboo continued learning the language; and I waited with anxiety for an answer from Jonker. The time passed pleasantly enough. I put my map of the country, so far as I had gone, into order, practised a good deal with my sextant, but made very little progress indeed in the language; I cound find no pleasure in associating and trying to chat with these Damaras, they were so filthy and disgusting in every way, and made themselves very troublesome. My mules were watched and taken out to graze by two natives, whom I fed and paid at the rate of a yard of iron wire per month.

After a time, no reply having arrived from Jonker, I engaged a Hottentot, who had four or five trained oxen, to take me to Barmen. He was a respectable old gentleman, who spoke Dutch perfectly, and every

now and then earned something by doing odd jobs for the missionaries. His honesty was unimpeachable; his family large; the ladies of it were thoroughly Hottentot, and the younger ones were dressed in leather skirts, that showed off their peculiar shapes to great advantage. Half of my things were put on ox-back, half on the mules. Timboo and I rode an ox and a mule between us. John Morta got a mount now and then, but he disliked both animals exceedingly. The mule curved his back and cocked his ears and switched his tail much more than was pleasant among the sharp rocks and abominable hakis thorns. These hakis thorns have overspread the whole country on this side of Tsobis; the tree is seldom more than fifteen feet high, with a short straight stem and a spreading bushy head; the thorns are all curved (hakis is the Dutch for hook), and, consequently, they do not hurt you like other thorns when you tumble into a bush, but only when you try to get *out* of it. My hands were cruelly torn with these thorns, and as I was still in bad condition, all the scratches festered; it was very painful, I could hardly close my hands for pain. Besides these, there were the "black thorn" and the "white thorn" (I take the names as I heard them); the first produces crisp tasteless gum in great abundance, the other a very sweet gum, that tastes and feels exactly like jujubes, but has a great tendency to ferment.

We travelled on very quietly to Barmen, as John Morta was lame, and there was no hurry. We were four days in going there. I like gipsying work

excessively, making a temporary home of a pretty spot and then going on without regret at leaving it.

A heavy thunder-storm swept by us, the first we had yet seen, and the harbinger of the rainy weather that was to provision me, as far as water was concerned, for my approaching journey. Deluges of rain and peals of thunder passed down the Swakop, such as only tropical countries can show.

Jonker's answer reached me at Barmen; it was rambling and unsatisfactory, begging that I would come to his town and discuss the matters. The letter, instead of having been sent by a direct messenger, had been passed from one person to another, so that it had occupied a month in travelling from the blue hills that bounded the horizon before me. I thought this highly disrespectful, and hardly knew how to act, when three days later brought intelligence of a Hottentot raid of a more murderous and extensive description than any that had taken place previously. Eleven whole werfts had been swept away; the Hottentots had passed within twenty miles of where I was, and fugitives came from every side telling of their misfortunes. Now this was too bad; but I determined to have patience for a little time—a traveller must learn patience—and I wrote Jonker another civil letter. I took the ground of supposing that he had not understood my last one, and I explained myself over again. My intentions were simply these: if he still intended to obstruct the way to Damara-land, in spite of the long, the carefully worded and well indited letters that I had sent him, and which explained fairly

enough what the feelings were with which the Cape Government regarded marauders like himself, I would try if I could not do something personally to further my own plans of exploring as I liked. I had no idea of undertaking a piece of Quixotism in behalf of the Damaras, who are themselves a nation of thieves and cut-throats; but I was determined that Jonker's contempt of white men should not be carried so far as to jeopardise my own plans. In fact, if he did not care a straw for me, as the bearer of the wishes of our common Government, I would take my own line as an individual who had a few good guns at command, and would do my best to force my point.

Whatever I was to do must be postponed till my men came, so I busied myself as usual with the milder occupations of latitudes and longitudes, and mapping. I built a wall, on the top of which I mounted my tent; a hut was made opposite for my two men, and the whole was well bushed in with thorns. I dined most days with Mr. Hahn, who gave me most full and accurate information about both Damaras and Hottentots. Timboo improved very much in the language, and was the life and soul of the place, while John Morta watched over my kraal like a dragon, and made the very children cry out with terror when he scowled at them. Mr. Hahn and I had numbers of the natives up to question them about the country to the north, but very little could be learnt. At last a man came to Mr. Hahn and said there was a great lake ten days off, of which he heard I had been in search, and that he would take me there, and the

name of the lake was Omanbondè. Its direction was somewhere between north and east. This was just what I wanted—a point to aim at, something to search for and explore. It seemed so very absurd to bring a quantity of men and oxen, and charge the scarcely penetrable hakis thorns which hemmed us in on every side, without something definite to go after. The name was pretty; the idea of a lake in this dusty sun-dried land was most refreshing, and, according to my temperament, I became immediately sanguine and determined to visit it.

A nation called the Ovampo were said to live in that direction, a very interesting agricultural people, who, according to Damara ideas, were most highly civilised. I wished much to go to them; they were the only people worth visiting that I could hear of; but I could find out very little regarding them. These savages were as ignorant of the country two days' journey off as an English labourer usually is. My friend, who told me of Omanbondè, told me also that I could get to the Ovampo by way of that lake, and he told me much more. He mentioned most particularly a remarkable nation, who were deficient in joints both at the elbow and knees. They were therefore unable to lift anything to their mouths by themselves; but when they dined, they did so in pairs, each man feeding his *vis-à-vis*.

We had, after a long drought, a most terrific thunderstorm: the lightning flashed so continuously that I could read a newspaper by its light without stopping, my eye taking in enough words by one flash to enable

me to read steadily on until the next one. It lightened in three different parts, and we were in the middle. There were some flowers in front of me, and the lightning was so vivid, and its light so pure, that I could not only see the flowers, but also their colours. I believe this is a very rare thing with lightning. There were four savages running in a line, about 100 yards off, on their way to their huts: after one of the flashes, only three remained; the other was struck dead. Mr. Hahn and I picked him up. It is curious how little a negro's features are changed by death; there is no paleness. His widow howled all night; and was engaged to be married again the succeeding day.

The Swakop ran violently after this storm, pouring vast volumes of turbid and broken water for three days down what had hitherto been an arid sandy channel.

Mr. Hahn's household was large. There was an interpreter, and a sub-interpreter, and again others; but all most excellently well-behaved, and showing to great advantage the influence of their master. These servants were chiefly Hottentots, who had migrated with Mr. Hahn from Hottentot-land, and, like him, had picked up the language of the Damaras. The sub-interpreter was married to a charming person, not only a Hottentot in figure, but in that respect a Venus among Hottentots. I was perfectly aghast at her development, and made inquiries upon that delicate point as far as I dared among my missionary friends. The result is, that I believe Mrs. Petrus to be the lady who ranks second among all the Hottentots for the

beautiful outline that her back affords, Jonker's wife ranking as the first; the latter, however, was slightly *passée*, while Mrs. Petrus was in full *embonpoint*. I profess to be a scientific man, and was exceedingly anxious to obtain accurate measurements of her shape; but there was a difficulty in doing this. I did not know a word of Hottentot, and could never therefore have explained to the lady what the object of my foot-rule could be; and I really dared not ask my worthy missionary host to interpret for me. I therefore felt in a dilemma as I gazed at her form, that gift of bounteous nature to this favoured race, which no mantua-maker, with all her crinoline and stuffing, can do otherwise than humbly imitate. The object of my admiration stood under a tree, and was turning herself about to all points of the compass, as ladies who wish to be admired usually do. Of a sudden my eye fell upon my sextant; the bright thought struck me, and I took a series of observations upon her figure in every direction, up and down, crossways, diagonally, and so forth, and I registered them carefully upon an outline drawing for fear of any mistake; this being done, I boldly pulled out my measuring-tape, and measured the distance from where I was to the place she stood, and having thus obtained both base and angles, I worked out the results by trigonometry and logarithms.

Mr. Hahn gave me a very interesting account of the first establishment of the Damara mission. He was permitted to leave Jonker's place after much trouble, and encamped amongst the negroes in company with

Mr. Bath and Mr. Bam. None of them knew a word of the language. No European had ever as yet learnt it, and the natives laughed at them, and annoyed them most excessively; they were mobbed and could do scarcely anything. At last, a lazy fellow, with his nose half-bitten off by a hyena, attached himself to them. He happened, besides being lazy, to be also a particularly intelligent man, and soon understood what the missionaries were driving at, when they endeavoured to get at the pronouns and tenses of this tongue of prefixes. He was of the greatest use to them, and, mainly through his aid, they have, after five or six years' labour, fully acquired the language. Their grammar and dictionary were to have been sent in 1852, to the professor of philology at Bonn, and have probably been received by this time.

This man's nose was seized by a hyena while he was asleep on his back—very unpleasant, and an excellent story to frighten children with. I could hardly believe it until a case occurred—quite *à-propos*. An old Bushwoman, who encamped under the lee of a few sticks and reeds that she had bent together, after the custom of those people, was sleeping coiled up close round the fire, with her lank feet straggling out in the dark, when a hyena, who was prowling about in the early morning, laid hold of her heel, and pulled her bodily half out of the hut. Her howls alarmed the hyena, who quitted his hold; and she hobbled up the next morning to us for plaisters and bandages. The very next night the old lady slept in the same fashion as before, and the hyena came in the same way, and

tugged at her heel just as he had done the previous evening. The poor creature was in a sad state; and I and one of Mr. Hahn's men sat up the next night to watch for the animal. I squatted in the shade of her house; my companion covered a side-path, and the woman occupied her hut as a bait. It was a grand idea, that of baiting with an old woman. The hyena came along the side-path, and there received his quietus.

All along the country about us was in the utmost confusion; but we were not annoyed at Barmen. Once indeed men came with the news that a body of Damaras had been seen prowling behind the rocks that form a broken background to the station; and we got everything ready for an attack, and watched through the night, but nothing came.

The fugitives from a lately dispersed werft were staying at Barmen; their cattle had been scattered all about the country, and three men went out on a three or four days' excursion to look after them. When they returned they came to the station yelling and leaping, and the whole population turned out and joined them in their war-dance. I never witnessed a more demoniacal display; their outrageous movements, their barking cries, the brandishing of the assegais, and the savage exultation of man, woman, and child at the thoughts of bloodshed, formed a most horrible scene. We heard that the meaning of it all was, that the Damaras, who were looking after their lost cattle, had found two of the robbers in the act of driving some of their herd a few miles from this place, and that they

had caught the men and killed them. The story seemed improbable on very many accounts, and as the scene of the slaughter was no great distance off, the interpreter and two or three men were sent on the spoor to find out what they could. They returned with the tale that in the middle of a river bed they had come to a place where the sand was much trodden down, and some blood was dashed about, and from that spot footsteps led in two directions, and with each set of footsteps there was the mark of something being dragged; the first spoor led to a bush on one side of the river where a man lay dead, the other to a thick hakis thorn cover, but nothing could be seen under it though the sand was disturbed. Looking further they found a spoor that went thence by itself right up the river bed. The interpreter followed it; it was that of a person crawling and dragging himself, and the wretched man whose track it was was found a mile off under a tree in a most pitiable state, with the back of his neck cut through to the bone. It was in the forenoon of the day before that he had been wounded, and it was now past the early morning, but he was still able to speak. He said—and further inquiries corroborated the story—that he and the man that lay dead were loitering about digging roots, when they saw a fire and the three Damaras, from Barmen, eating meat over it; an ox lay slaughtered by their side. They offered to feed them if they would help to carry as much meat to Barmen as they could, so they agreed and went on. Arriving at the river bed, the three men fell upon their two porters, knocked them down

with their knob kerries, and struck them till they were nearly insensible, and then hacked at their necks with their assegais. This one was left for dead, but he recovered, and succeeded in crawling from under the thorn bush to where he was found. The tenacity of life in a negro is wonderful. The object of the murder proved to be simply this—The three Damaras had found cattle belonging to their werft but not to themselves; they were hungry and killed an ox to have a good gorge, and then, not knowing how to get out of the scrape of having killed their friends' cattle, they determined to lay the guilt upon these two unhappy men, and therefore murdered them. It would never do to leave this man to die where he was, so I went with water, a litter and some bandages. The first man's throat was cut quite through, and he had long been dead; the second man I found under the shadow of a tree with his head between his two hands on his knees and insensible, but we roused him up, his lips were cracked with thirst and he could not speak. I could never have believed that a man with a wound like this could have survived an hour; all the back sinews of his neck were severed to the bone, and the cut went quite round his neck, but only skin deep near the jugular vein and windpipe. The head was perfectly loose upon his shoulders, and heavily bruised, and his skin was torn with the hakis thorns. I put him on the litter, but his head rolled so shockingly from side to side as the litter moved that I was obliged to make two cushions of grass, one on each side of his head, to steady it. At Barmen he was not able to give any

further account, as he became delirious and died in a few hours.

I had sent messages to the different chiefs trying to explain what the instructions were that I had received at Cape Town. The way of authenticating messages in this part of the world is curious; it is by giving some token to the messenger which he shows as a guarantee that he really comes from the person he professes to represent, just as our ancestors who were not clever at writing sent their signet rings. I could not tell what to send; it ought to be something very characteristic and not worth stealing—an article that neither grease, rain, nor dirt could spoil, and impossible to be broken. All my things were reviewed, but none were suitable except a great French cuirassier's sword in a steel scabbard, one that I had bought years before in Egypt. This was just the thing. The Damaras adore iron as we adore gold; and the brightness of the weapon was charming in their eyes. They had no idea of its use, as swords are unknown to them, but they considered it as a large knife. I therefore girded my messenger with it in the presence of his companion, and Mr. Hahn translated for me a short message to this effect—That I came from a great chief and a large nation who did not rob as the Namaquas did, but wished to be friends and not enemies with the Damaras, and to send traders into their country; that our land was very fertile, and we did not want any other, but we wanted cattle, and our traders would bring iron and buy them; that the Damaras must not think when our people come that

they are spies, for they are friends, and they must treat them kindly. The messengers then repeated what they had heard, to show that they recollected it, and were given a sheep to cut up and carry for their provision, and started off. I received civil answers on the messengers' return; but the Damaras are all so hostile to each other, tribe against tribe, that I found it impossible to bring the chiefs together. Still I was glad that I had sent my messages, as it was a demonstration, and that might be of some immediate good to me.

CHAPTER IV.

I go to meet the waggons.—Start for Erongo.—En route.—Damara features.—Gabriel in a Scrape.—The Mountain Erongo.—Chase Zebras.—Ghou Damup Huts.—A Black coquette.—Return to Waggons.—Leave Otjimbinguè.—Mishaps.—How to encamp and water Oxen.—Arrive at Barmen, thence to Schmelen's Bay.—Ride to Eikhams.—A doomed sufferer.—Visit Jonker.—Conference with him.—Swartboy and Amiral.—Ride on to Rehoboth.—Umap's Judgment.—Obtain Interpreters.—Return to Rehoboth.—Murder a Dog and pay for it.—Conference at Eikhams.—Legislating.—Proposed Conference.—Mules run quite away.—Schmelen's Hope.—Dates.

In the last week of November I received the welcome news of Andersson's arrival at Otjimbinguè with the waggons. The oxen had taken them up in five long stages from Scheppmansdorf, working by night and resting thirty-six hours between each pull. It was impossible for me to leave Barmen, as matters were now pending between me and the native chiefs, and I daily expected to hear some news of Jonker's movements. On December 4th, Andersson rode over to me, and his and Hans' performances with the unbroken oxen and two heavy waggons were loudly praised by everybody. All had gone well; Andersson had shot his first rhinoceros, my men had worked fairly, all except one waggon-driver, who, besides laziness and insolence, had been caught in the act of

stealing to a great extent. He was a man I had determined to get rid of some time before, and I now only waited until I could engage somebody to take his place before I did so.

Nothing in particular transpired. I failed in learning more about Omabondè, and returned to Otjimbinguè.

I went a few days before Andersson, as I wished to visit Erongo with Hans, before starting with the waggons. I left the mules at Barmen, and rode back on ride-oxen which Andersson had brought for me. The mules were troublesome creatures, requiring too much watching; they constantly tried to run away, and when off, their pace was so good that the men had runs of many hours before they could overtake and bring them back. They gave me great anxiety at first, but now I was quite tired of their tricks and hardly cared what became of them.

I arrived at Otjimbinguè about the 10th of December, and found the waggons drawn up on the cliff under a thick roofing of reeds, and with reeds stacked all round them. Every thing looked most perfectly in order, and I felt delighted with Hans' management. My waggon gear had required much putting in order; the trek-tows or ropes to which the yokes were fastened were quite rotten; they were remarkably good pieces of rope when I bought them in Cape Town, so much so as to attract the critical eye of the sailors; but nothing of hemp or cotton stands this climate. I do not know why, but string, yarn, shirts, and thread all become useless after a short exposure

to the air. Hans had therefore saved the hide of every ox that had been slaughtered, and had either dressed it to make reims and such like things, or else twisted it up raw to make into a trek-tow. We still wanted one hide, which a gnu was kind enough to afford us. Hans wounded him after a long stalk; but though the animal got off for the time, he was steadily followed by Hans and John Allen for hours, till night-fall; they then slept on the track and took it up again the next morning; in a couple of hours they found the beast on three legs, at bay, under a stone, where he was shot and flayed. Gnu is literally the only hide, besides that of oxen and koodoos, that is fit for a trek-tow; almost all other animals have either too small and too thin skins, or else the opposite extreme, while gemsbok and zebra hides, which are of the right thickness, are the worst of leather.

I stopped a day at Otjimbinguè, and then rode off with Hans, John St. Helena, and Gabriel, to the mountain Erongo; it was partly an excursion to buy oxen and sheep for my journey, and partly to see the country, and that remarkable stronghold of the Ghou Damup. The drought was so great, no constant rain having fallen, that troops of Damaras were flocking in from all sides to the comparatively abundant water of the Mission station. One of the captains, who was in advance of the rest of his people, offered to go back with me as guide. He said he would take us to different werfts on our road, where we might barter as much as we liked, but that he dare not take us to Erongo, as his people and the Ghou Damup who lived

there were always fighting together. I took a few articles of exchange, some of each of the different things that I had, and we all started in the afternoon.

Our native followers included two Ghou Damups, who were to introduce us to their relatives on Erongo, in the same way as the captain was to recommend us to his friends on the road.

We emerged from the broad valley of the Swakop, after three hours' travelling, then scrambled along a very stony road, offpacked for a couple of hours in a watercourse, and travelled on till daybreak, when we came to the first Damara village, where, after a good deal of explanation and long waiting, we were tolerated and allowed some milk. Hans was my only interpreter. A little bartering took place here, and some sheep were bought. We then rode on down a broad grassy plain, bounded on the left by high mountains, and some more bartering took place at midday; our oxen on each occasion being put under the charge of the captain of the tribe, who had them watered and sent out to grass. I felt nervous at being amongst such numbers of armed ill-looking scoundrels as these Damaras are; their features are usually placid, but the least excitement brings out all the lines of a savage passion. They always crowded round us and hemmed us in, and then tried to hustle us away from our bags and baggage. They have an impudent way of handling and laying hold of every thing they covet, and of begging in an authoritative tone, laughing among themselves all the time. It is very difficult to keep them off; the least show of temper would be very

hazardous among such a set of people, and it is hardly possible to amuse and keep them in order without a ready command of their language. I must say that these savages are magnificent models for sculptors, for they are tall, cleanly made, and perfectly upright; their head is thrown well back, and their luxuriant but woolly hair is clustered round an open forehead; their features are often beautifully chiselled, though the expression in them is always coarse and disagreeable. Their whole body shines with grease and red paint (if they can afford those luxuries), and though they are the dirtiest and most vermin-covered of savages, yet the richer class among them are well polished up, and present an appearance which at a short distance is very imposing and statuesque. They call clothes by the same name that they give to the scum of stagnant water; and I must say that, in personal appearance, these naked savages were far less ignoble objects than we Europeans in our dirty shirts and trousers.

We arrived at our guide's werft in the afternoon, and I was thoroughly fatigued from heat and want of sleep, and a pretty long ride; but Hans kept watch and bartered perpetually. I could find no shade—there scarcely ever is shade in Damara-land—but dropped asleep for two or three hours in the full sun, which made me sick and poorly. Gabriel had recovered a little of the spirits that he had lost by travelling, and was now becoming impudent to the Damaras; he had a quick angry temper when annoyed, (having already tried to stab two of his fellow servants), and now that

the Damaras were thronging round us and teasing us a great deal, I was in much alarm lest some imprudence of the lad's should give them a pretext for an attack. If fighting had once commenced, we should have been as full of assegais as St. Sebastian ever was of arrows, and our guns would have availed but little. Just at this time, as we were all squatting in a ring, except Hans and John St. Helena, who were a little to one side and out of the way, some hungry native dogs paid our saddlebags a visit, and gnawed at the leather. Gabriel took a rhinoceros-hide whip to frighten them off, and one snarled, but retreated to his master through the middle of the ring. Gabriel rushed, quite daft, after the dog, and gave a tremendous slash with the long supple whip at him, but he quite over-reached his aim, and the chief got the benefit of the cut full on his legs. Another instant and Gabriel was prostrate, while the chief, like a wild beast, glared over him; the muscle of every Damara was on the stretch. Every man had his assegai. My gun lay by my side, but I had sense enough not to clutch at it. I tried with all my power to look as steady and unconcerned as I could, and I must partly thank the sun which had baked my face into a set expression, for success. It was a fearfully anxious time to me, though it lasted but for a moment; gradually the savage's grasp relaxed, the Damaras around fell back into *nonchalant* attitudes, and at length the ferocious expression of the chief's face somewhat smoothed down, and he rose and allowed the disconcerted Gabriel to sneak off, but kept the whip as a trophy, and possibly as a memento of

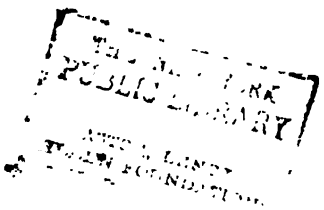
wrongs received. When we were about to start, I made myself as civil as I could, and then gently took hold of the whip, and he allowed me to coax it out of his hand, so all ended well.

We had bought four or five oxen and a few sheep, which we intended to drive with us to Erongo, the broad table mountain that now lay eight hours in front of us and bounded the horizon. It was five hours' travel to the next water, but it took us much longer, for we had some hunting by the way. The heat became fearful, and fever was upon me; I could hardly sit the journey out, and was extremely glad to get to the bed of the Canna river, (a tributary of the Swakop) where an hour's "crowing" and digging gave enough water for the oxen. After a good meal, as the evening was clear, we were again in the saddle, and pushed on for the mountains, the length of whose escarpment from east to west was fifteen miles. Its height by rough sextant measurement was 2800 feet. In one part of it there was a break, the mountains rising like parapets on either hand, and to this break we steered. It was pitch dark when we got there, and glad I was to lay my throbbing head to rest.

In the morning I dispatched the two Ghou Damups up the hill to tell the inhabitants of our arrival, and to request guides from them. I spent the morning in sleeping under huge overhanging slabs of limestone, enjoying to the full "the shadow of a broad rock in a thirsty land." In the afternoon we rambled about trying to climb the hill, and to obtain a good view of the adjacent country. The rocks that composed

Erongo were here in huge smooth white masses—often hundreds of feet without a fissure—the hill seemed built by some Cyclopean architect. Immense round boulders of the same stones were strewed here and there at its base. Our Ghou Damup returned in the evening with a promise that guides should be sent us early the next day. We put our articles of exchange into small packs, as men had to carry them up the steep mountain by the footroad. When cattle are sent up, they are driven round to a different and more distant entrance, which we did not care to visit. It is just practicable for oxen and no more.

We had a grand chase after some zebras in the early morn; a large herd had ventured into the recess in which we were encamped during the night, and as they returned smelt our fire and headed back. We heard them, and everybody ran to cut them off, some with guns and some without; the zebras made a round and galloped through a narrow gorge within arm's length of those who were there. We could not carry our sleeping things up the mountain, as they were too heavy, but I took a small plaid. I was very unwell, but tried to battle off my fever. John St. Helena, Gabriel, and the Damaras, were left to watch the cattle below—while Hans and I and the Ghou Damup climbed for two hours over smooth slabs, most of the time without shoes for fear of slipping. The slabs over which the only path lay were disjointed from the main rock, and enormous fissures lay between them and it. When we travelled along the side that sloped towards these fissures it was to me very nervous work, for my feet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Drawn on Stone by W. J. Walton

Printed by Ballmann & Cutler

TRAVELLER WITH PACK-OXEN

would not grasp the rock, and if I had tumbled I should have explored much more of the mountain than I desired. The measurement of these slabs is not in feet but in hundreds of feet. Once on the top, the air was deliciously cool, and the boulders strewn about gave shade to sit under when we pleased. Leopards are very numerous here; they have nothing wild to feed on except baboons and steinboks—however the Ghou Damup have plenty of sheep and goats, and these the leopards attack. The summit of Erongo is a succession of ravines clothed with thorn-coppice, and a great deal of cactus; the effect is pretty, and I should much like to live there for summer quarters. Along the ravines, a few wild fig-trees grow. After a couple of hours of up and down walking, in which we started a magnificent leopard, we arrived at the chief's werft, and I liked its situation and effect very much,—it was not in the open flat, like those of the Damaras, who fear the neighbourhood of any cover which might conceal an advancing enemy, but among trees. It was also built more durably. The Damara huts have but one room; they are like those I described at Walfisch Bay; these were rather complicated. The frame-work of the hut was generally made by growing trees, a clump of which was selected and their lower branches thinned; then the tops were bent down and *pleached* together; the trees in the middle dividing the huts into two or even three rooms. The shape on the outside was like a snail-shell, the entrance faced to the leeward. Going into the chief's hut, the entrance led straight into the main apartment, on either side of which were rooms,

one of them for the chief's wife. There were plenty of utensils about, such as wooden milk-bowls, pipes, and so on: there was a stuffed ottoman, and the whole place had a great appearance of comfort. The chief was a gentleman, and very courteous. Though Hottentot was his language, yet he spoke a little Damara, in which language we talked to him. He had a charming daughter, the greatest belle among the blacks that I had ever seen, and a most thorough-paced coquette. Her main piece of finery, and one that she flirted about in a most captivating manner, was a shell of the size of a penny-piece. She had fastened it to the end of a lock of front hair, which was of such a length as to permit the shell to dangle to the precise level of her eyes. She had learnt to move her head with so great precision as to throw the shell exactly over whichever eye she pleased, and the lady's winning grace consisted in this feat of bo-peep, first eclipsing one eye and languishing out of the other, and then with an elegant toss of the head reversing the proceedings.

Her papa would sell me no oxen nor sheep; he insisted that he had none, though the place was full of tracks. But these people are very cunning to strangers, lest the stranger should think proper to steal their cattle. I very much regretted that I had not a good interpreter, as I had taken a fancy to the chief, and should have liked to have had a long conversation with him. He was not paramount over the mountain, but there were one or two more captains. Indeed, he assured me he could not give me guides

over the hill, as his men dare not travel about it. I was obliged to return, for I had my time limited in many ways; else I should have liked to have fully explored the place. The fever that was on me increased hourly, and I was anxious to return. The night was bitterly cold, but I curled myself in my thin plaid round the fire, and got through the long hours somehow or other. The chief and I interchanged presents; we bought a few goats, and returned as we came. The rocky slabs looked more dangerous and slippery than ever, but no accident occurred. The next evening we slept at the werft, where Gabriel had distinguished himself. I felt wandering, and was delirious during most of the night, but could sit on ox-back well enough the next day—it was Christmas day, but I dared not stop to do it honour. We rode on five hours. Hans shot four zebras. The Damaras gave us milk in exchange for their meat, and that was our dinner. The next night I was again ill, but less so than before; and the ensuing day I rode through to Otjimbinguè: the distance between it and Erongo is about twenty hours' travel. The result of my journey was, that I bought twenty-five oxen and thirty or forty sheep (four common guns had been bartered for twenty oxen), which was a material addition to my stock.

Andersson, who had had a slight fever like myself, was there in full vigour; he had been in an almost hand-to-hand combat with a lion, for the beast was on one side of a small bush, growling at him, whilst he was on the other. He shot the lion. A stirring night

scene had occurred here, which Andersson witnessed. As the evening closed in, some people saw a lion kill a giraffe on the opposite side of the river: the alarm was given; everybody took firebrands; and it was quite dark when the mob arrived at the place. They ran unconcernedly up to the giraffe, and frightened the lion off it, who kept roaring and prowling about them close by, whilst they cut up the meat.

I determined to leave my cart at Otjimbinguè, as I had hardly mules enough to take it; neither could I spare Timboo to drive it. It was thatched over against the side of the Mission house; and Mr. Rath kindly took charge of the mule's harness.

Two days after my return from Erongo, my first experience in waggon-travelling began: I hated it from the first, and never became reconciled to it: I disliked its slowness, and the want of independence about it. In a rugged and wooded country long détours have to be made to avoid obstacles which ride and pack oxen go across without difficulty. Roads have to be explored, bushes cut down, and the great stones rolled out of the way. The waggon is a crushing, cumbrous affair, and according to my ideas, totally unfitted for the use of an explorer, except in moderately level countries. I was never happier than when I left it behind, and took to the saddle.

The oxen were excessively wild, and seemed to have quite forgotten what they had learnt. It took us from an hour and a half to two hours to inspan the two waggons, notwithstanding we had so great a force of men, most of whom were acknowledged to be

thoroughly acquainted with the management of oxen. We had a succession of mishaps the whole way to Barmen: it took us seven days to go the seventy miles; and my men had no light work of it. The rainy season was daily expected, and when it comes, violent torrents constantly sweep down the Swakop: this was unpleasant, as its bed had to be crossed perpetually, and it was invariably in the midst of its deep sand that the oxen came to a halt, and resolutely refused more work for that day. On one occasion the sticking-point was a steep sand-pitch, of about six feet high, out of the river-bed. The oxen drew the waggon till its fore-wheels reached the top of the pitch, and there it stuck. We tried everything, but the pull was entirely beyond their power; indeed, they were far too wild to exert themselves together. It really seemed as though we should remain fixed there, till the oxen had been thoroughly broken in by other means, or till the river swept us away; however, I recollected the manner in which our ancestors, in the times of the Druids, are said to have managed their large stones, and tried that plan on my waggon: that is to say, I lifted one wheel with the lifter, and had a flat stone put under it, then the other, and did the same to that, and so I continued raising the hind-wheels alternately, until the back end of the waggon was lifted up some three feet on two piles of stones. I had of course to be careful in making my buildings very firm, and in scotching the fore-wheels, lest the waggon should run back. I now built a causeway from the piles up to the fore-wheels, and lastly, put smooth stones not only

under these, but also for a few paces in advance of them. That completed the task, which only required two hours to execute, for there were plenty of flat stones about, and I had ten or twelve men to carry them. I then inspanned a team, who trotted away with the waggon quite easily along my pavement.

The water was all "crow-water," and my herd of oxen and sheep were all watered by hand. The way we set about choosing our place for encampment, and making it, was this: as the waggon still moved on, we kept a look-out along the river bed, till some indications were seen of water, such as holes or small wells dug by Damaras, who had been camping about. If the yield of water appeared sufficient, and if there was any show of grass near, the waggons were outspanned. The place chosen was by a tree or at the side of some bush, where the requisites of a smooth ground to sleep upon, shelter from the wind, abundant thorn-bushes to make a sheep's kraal of, and neighbouring firewood, were best combined. The Damaras were then sent with axes to cut thorn-bushes for the kraal; the white men went with spades to dig a couple of wells out, and make them broad and deep, and the cattle watchers were off with the oxen and sheep to grass—two men to each flock or herd. They often fed a couple of miles away from us. Any idle hand fetched enough firewood to start two cooking fires, on one of which the iron pots for the dinners of myself, Andersson, Hans, and John Morta, were placed; on the other, those of the waggon-men. The Damaras had an iron pot between them, but they never had food given them till late, or

else they stopped working, in order to eat it at once. Usually we had to slaughter something. The waggon-driver and the men's cook generally killed the sheep; if an ox was wanted I shot him. Thus a great many different things were going on at the same time: the men were digging wells, slaughtering and cutting up, cooking at two fires; the Damaras were watching cattle, cutting thorn-bushes, and carrying firewood. When the wells were deepened sufficiently, a hollow trough was scooped out in the sand, and a piece of canvass laid on it; the oxen were then sent for; and while Damaras stood in the well with a wooden "bamboose," a sort of bucket, ladling out water into the canvass, the oxen were driven up by threes to drink. But unless the ground is very porous the canvass sheet is hardly necessary. In this way one gives drink at the rate of about an ox a minute at each well—and sheep drink very fast indeed; it seldom required an hour to water my herd after the wells were once cleared out.

The thorn-branches for the kraal are laid round a circle, each alongside the other, in the direction of radii: the cut ends are inwards, and the broad bushy *heads*, not the *sides* of the branch, make the outer circumference. Sheep and goats pack into so small a space, that their kraal has never to be more than twenty feet diameter; but they must have one, or else every kind of accident would occur, for they are by no means so domestic as oxen, and very stupid. If it were not for a kraal the hyenas, who serenade us every night, would be sure to do constant mischief, and

scatter the flock over the country. Oxen, unless thirsty, or hungry, or cold, or in a restless, home-sick state of mind, never leave the waggons, but lie in a group round the fire, chewing the cud, with their large eyes glaring in the light, and apparently thinking. We made no kraal for them. To continue: as the evening closes in the sheep are driven into their kraal, the door is bushed up, the Damaras get their meat, and make their own sleeping-places, and we get our dinner. Then I make a few observations with my sextant, which occupies an hour or so, and everybody else has some mending or some other employment. Timboo gets out my rug and sleeping-things; the firewood is brought close to the fire; and we lie down in two large groups, Andersson, Hans, John Morta, and myself, round one fire, and the waggon-men and Damaras round the other, and all gradually drop off to sleep, the Damaras invariably being the last awake. It is a great mistake to suppose that "early to bed and early to rise" is the rule among savages. All those that I have seen, whether in the north or south, eat and talk till a very late hour. I grant that they get up early, but then they sleep half the day.

When we outspanned a few hours from Barmen, I rode on in the evening, very anxious to learn if anything new had been heard from Jonker. It was all very unfavourable. No actual attack had taken place, but the Damaras were scattered, and bands of them were prowling about their country. Not one of my Damaras would go on with me. A guide that I had picked up at Otjimbinguè refused to proceed.

There was a growing fear among my own men; and Jonker's previous personal threats to me, such as they were, were corroborated. I therefore determined to make some sort of demonstration which would bring him into better order: and in doing this I was confirmed by a rather humble request which I had received from him when I was at Barmen, that I would visit him at his place, from which I gathered, either that he intended to play some tricks upon me there, or else that he felt he had gone too far, and was penitent. In either case my presence would bring matters to a crisis, and get rid of that uncertainty and delay which would breed discouragement among my men, and be fatal to my scheme of travel. I wished to force some open admission from the man that his late conduct towards the missionaries and the Damaras had been infamous, and to do it in such a way that the Damaras should hear about it, and understand that I was in no mood either to abet or to obey the Hottentots.

Barmen was a bad place for me to encamp at, as grass was extremely scarce; so I moved on to Schmelen's Hope, which was the Ultima Thule of discovery in Damara-land; there a strong ox-kraal was made, and the deserted and half pulled-down house put in order; and leaving Andersson in charge, I took Hans, John Morta, and one of the waggon-men, who spoke very good Dutch, and started for Jonker. I previously gave it out among the Damaras that I was gone to make peace between the Hottentots and them. I packed up my red hunting-coat, jack-boots, and cords,

and rode in my hunting-cap: it was a costume unknown in these parts, and would, I expected, aid in producing the effect I desired. I started on the 16th of December. It was about a three days' ride; but as none of us knew the road, we strayed a little, which made us longer. I saw a horrible sight on the way, which has often haunted me since. We had taken a short cut, and were a day and a half from our waggons, when I observed some smoke in front, and rode to see what it was: an immense blackthorn tree was smouldering, and from the quantity of ashes about, there was all the appearance of its having burnt for a long time: by it were tracks that we could make nothing of; no footmarks, only an impression of a hand here and there. We followed them, and found a wretched woman, most horribly emaciated; both her feet were burnt quite off, and the wounds were open and unhealed. Her account was that many days back she and others were encamping there; and when she was asleep, a dry but standing tree, which they had set fire to, fell down, and entangled her among its branches: there she was burnt before she could extricate herself, and her people left her. She had since lived on gum alone, of which there was vast quantities about; it oozes down from the trees, and forms large cakes in the sand. There was water close by, for she was on the edge of a river-bed. I did not know what to do with her; I had no means of conveying her anywhere, or any place to convey her to. The Damaras kill useless and worn-out people: even sons smother their sick fathers; and death was

evidently not far from her. I had three sheep with me, so I off-packed, and killed one. She seemed ravenous; and though I purposely had off-packed some two hundred yards from her, yet the poor wretch kept crawling and dragging herself up to me, and would not be withheld, for fear I should forget to give her the food I promised. When it was ready, and she had devoured what I gave her, the meat acted, as it often does in such cases, and fairly intoxicated her: she attempted to stand, regardless of the pain, and sang, and tossed her lean arms about. It was perfectly sickening to witness the spectacle. I did the only thing I could: I cut the rest of the meat in strips, and hung it within her reach, and where the sun would jerk (i.e. dry and preserve) it. It was many days' provision for her. I saw she had water, firewood, and gum in abundance, and then I left her to her fate.

We had a little shooting on our way, and I also had an opportunity of climbing a high hill, which is a very conspicuous land-mark, whence I had a wonderfully fine view both of the country I had visited and also a glimpse of that which I hoped soon to explore. We scrambled over some very rugged and thorny ground for five hours, having quite lost our way, but making a cast, came down on the waggon-road at a place which was recognised by Hans as being three or four hours from Eikhams, Jonker's village: it was an immense kraal, formed by a strong stockade, in which Katjimasha (a Damara chief) intrenched himself once when he and Jonker were allies, and robbed the other Damaras in company. Some years back they had dissolved

partnership, and Katjimasha not feeling safe, absconded with all his men to Damara-land, of which he is now one of the principal chiefs: here I made my toilet, and refreshed my trusty ox, and in the cool of the evening rode down upon Eikhams. Hans knew the place, though not the road we had travelled to it, and pointed out a hill, round the corner of which the village lay. Even Ceylon (my ox) caught the excitement, and snuffed the air like a war-horse. We formed together, gained the corner of the hill; Hans recognised Jonker's hut, and we, I cannot say dashed, but jogged right at it. An obstacle occurred, and happily was surmounted, which might have much disconcerted the assault: it was a ditch, or little ravine, that a torrent had made; it was rather deep, and four feet wide; but I was in hunting costume, and I am sure Ceylon knew it, for he shook his head, and took it uncommonly well; in fact, oxen, if you give them time, are not at all bad leapers. The others followed in style. So far was well. The huts of the place were all in front, and Jonker's much the largest. Everybody saw us, and was looking at us. There is great etiquette in these parts about coming to a strange place, but we defied all that, and I rode and rode, until my ox's head not only faced, but actually filled the door of the astonished chief. Conceive the effect. My Dutch was far from fluent, so I rated him in English, and after a while condescended to use an interpreter. He never dared look me in the face, as I glared down upon him from my ox. I then rode away in a huff, and took up my quarters in the village, and

received in great state the humble messages which he sent me.

Now all this may seem laughable, but Oerlams are like children, and the manner which wins respect from them is not that which has most influence with us. To go a step higher,—to the burly broad-limbed Dutch colonists: I must relate a rather amusing instance of the views some acquaintances of mine among them entertained of the *physique* of those high officials in England, whose enactments wielded their destiny. It was after the anti-convict agitation; and the friends I allude to expressed the utmost surprise, and even disbelief, at hearing that the then Colonial Minister was not a person of six foot stature, else how could he have dared to oppose their wishes. I inquired further, and found that report commonly painted his lordship as a kind of ogre or violent giant.

I desired Jonker to come to me with his chief people, and I lectured them soundly. We had three or four interviews. I spoke in English, and was interpreted both into Dutch and Hottentot. I saw clearly that I had made a favourable impression upon them. I insisted upon a full and ample apology being written to Mr. Kolbe, and an assurance given of future forbearance and justice being shown towards the Damaras. Jonker begged that Cornelius, the chief of the red people, should be called to his place, and such other people of importance in these parts as could be brought together; and he also mentioned his willingness to enter into any feasible plan for the establishment of better order in the country. The four

chiefs hereabouts are Jonker and Amiral, who are Oerlams; Swartboy and Cornelius, who are pure Hottentots. Messengers were at once despatched to Cornelius and Amiral; and I, wishing to see Rehoboth, rode over there, and undertook to bring back Swartboy. His tribe is a large but not a strong one. A long time ago he was as bad as any of the rest, if not worse; but Sir James Alexander, when he came into the country, frightened him into order, and since that time missionaries have settled in his place, and obtained considerable influence over him. Swartboy's present position was merely a passive one; but his character carried much weight with it, and I desired to make him a party to what Jonker and Cornelius should arrange together. I wished also to make him friendly to myself. The other chief, Amiral, an Oerlam, was far off. He had always treated the whites particularly well; but his son and heir and part of his tribe were said to have beeen robbing the Damaras of late. Neither Jonker nor any other Hottentot has supreme power in his tribe; for these people are most tenacious republicans, and insist upon a council of elders finally ratifying everything that is proposed. But Jonker is by far the most influential man in the whole country, and has his own way in everything. I believe that on great emergencies he dispenses with the deliberations of the council. I had a long conversation with Jonker upon those parts of Damara-land which he had seen. He had made two long excursions with a large body of men on each occasion: one by Erongo, to somewhere near Cape Cross; the other, in

which he tried to reach the Ovampo, but was unable to proceed further than Omanbondé, on account of the exhausted state of his oxen. He and his men had brought back all kinds of wonderful and impossible reports about the lake Omanbondé; but the information which he gave me himself was, so far as it went, perfectly accurate. He spoke much of the native Bushmen that he found there, and who went freely among the Ovampo. This surprised me much, as I had no idea that the Hottentot race existed so far to the north. Jonker was perfectly familiar by report with the river that formed the further boundary of the Ovampo.

A very intelligent Englishman, a blacksmith, who lived at Rehoboth, was returning there at the time I proposed starting from Jonker's, and I travelled in his waggon. A great part of the distance, we went through broad plains, bordered by high and distant hills, and full of grass, but hardly any water. The last stage, from water to water, was eleven hours' travel, with a little pool from a previous storm in the middle; but this failed on our return. Rehoboth is situated on a bare white limestone rock, with a hot spring of mineral water gushing out—a situation anything but pleasant; yet the village is very orderly and neat.

I heard the full particulars of a late judgment and punishment by Umap, an independent chief of a very small tribe, though he had, at least, an equal claim with Cornelius to the chiefdom of the red people. Umap's son became ill, and wasted away; the guilt was fastened on some neighbouring Bushmen, who

were accused of charming away his life. Umap, therefore, had a pit dug, about five feet across, and seven or eight deep, and he made a bonfire in it; then he took the eight Bushmen and women, on whom his suspicion had fallen, and put them down alive into this pit, covered them over with hot earth, and made a second fire above their grave. The incident occurred before I landed at Walfisch Bay, but I had not had the story corroborated till now. Umap is not considered otherwise than as a very respectable Hottentot; but he is classed as one of the old school.

I met Swartboy travelling in his waggon, and we had a couple of hours' conversation, in which I was very favourably impressed with him. He was a reasonable, good-hearted, but rather timid old man. He promised to use his influence, as far as he could, towards furthering any arrangements which would lead to peace in the country, and said he would meet the other captains at Eikhams at the time appointed. I was excessively annoyed to hear of the doings of the man I had discarded as being a confirmed bad character. He had been making an improper use of my name, declaring that I had sent him on some special message; and that unless he was well fed and taken care of, I should come with a complete army of men, &c. &c. He had frightened Swartboy's people into great civility, and then stole cattle from them, and drove them off, while Swartboy's people dared not punish him. He was said to be fifteen hours' off, and, though I had but two days and three nights to spare, I was determined to ride after and catch him if I could. I am for

flogging men for stealing, or attempt at murder; and this was a case that came within my code, so I borrowed oxen and was off. The night was too dark to start in, till about one o'clock in the morning, when I rode very fast in three stages to the place, which we were able to reach during the late afternoon of the next day. To my grief the fellow had trecked southwards in the morning, and was now many hours further; and had also stated his intention of travelling steadily on. My oxen were knocked up, and so were we; and overtaking him now was out of the question, hungry as we were. As soon as the pot was put on the fire, we all fell fast asleep, and forgot our dinner till the midnight chill awoke us. Trotting on oxback for many hours is very severe work, if the animals as they usually do, require much urging. The creatures had eaten, and were fit to return on the forenoon of the next day; and we returned late in the night to Rehoboth.

I there obtained some valuable additions to my stock of oxen. Timmerman, the one I had just ridden, I bought off-hand: he was a tame, sturdy ox; I also got two couple of front oxen, and some hind oxen. These are the important ones of the team; and if good, the rest are easily made to do their work. I also hired a black waggon-driver, Phlebus, who knew nothing of his own language, but had been a trained Hottentot and Dutch interpreter; and Swartboy very kindly gave me his henchman, Onesimus, who, besides being by profession his life-guardsman, was his interpreter to the Damaras. These two were most accurate renderers of whatever

they were told to say, as could be easily judged from the answers of the persons addressed. Timboo interpreted loosely from either English or Dutch into Damara, but he knew none of these languages well: he had a patois of his own. People at first find conversation by interpreters a bore; but after a little use it becomes no greater hindrance, as it is no greater delay, than dictating or writing a letter. Savages, who are naturally sententious, fall very readily into the system; and here, where the Hottentots and Damaras are so often brought into contact, every chief is well accustomed to it.

We were a good deal troubled for the want of water on our return; the little pool I mentioned was dried up, and we had taken no water with us, for want of a vessel to carry it in. Our Damaras, who drove the cattle, were quite knocked up under the excessive heat, and a Ghou Damup, whose charge it was to carry the iron pot, lay down somewhere altogether exhausted. At night we arrived, and all of us drank water till we were quite ill. I continued resolving to drink no more, and then rewarded my resolution with one more mouthful. One cannot help drinking, the water seems to have no effect in quenching the thirst. The next day we rode but a short distance, as we had to wait for the two men who were missing, and they might be badly put to it. However, they never came. We thought the Ghou Damup had stolen the pot, and absconded in an old soldier's coat, with which I had just rewarded his fidelity. There was considerable doubt if we should find water for the remainder of the

journey; and, as our stomachs had been thrown out of order, I hardly liked to go so far without taking some: I could not think what to use as a water vessel, when my eye fell upon a useless cur of ours, that never watched, and only frightened game by running after them, and whose death I had long had in view. Dog-skin is the most waterproof of hides, so I despatched the cur and skinned him. His death was avenged upon me in a striking manner, for during the night a pack of wild dogs came upon us, scattered our sheep who were not well kraaled in, and killed them all. We traced the carcasses of some in the morning by the vultures that settled upon them. Two goats alone remained, which I had bought at Eikhams. Oddly enough, just as we were starting, the goats disappeared: we beat every bush for half an hour, but could not find them. At last we became tired of the search, and continued our journey, reaching Eikhams at night. To our wonder and amazement, as soon as we arrived, we met the faithful lost Ghou Damup, not only with the iron pot on his head, like a helmet, as he usually wore it, and red coat on his back, but also driving the identical goats we had lost, and which were under his peculiar charge. He had found them walking along the waggon spoor; they must have run on a-head before we first lost them, and then fallen into the hands of the Ghou Damup, who had himself passed us without knowing it. He felt he had done wrong in staying behind, but he said he was very tired. He had found some roots on the way, and lived on them. After his story, he brought me a

whacking big stick, quite as a matter of course, that I should beat him for what he had done.

The water-skin I had made was not of much use, as the day was comparatively cool. Being fresh from the animal, it had to be used with the hair inside. It held the water very well, but gave a "doggy" taste to it. Swartboy and Cornelius were waiting for me; the latter was anything but a chief, either in manner or appearance. Nothing had been heard from Amiral; it was barely possible that any answer should have been received, owing to the distance.

Besides the three chiefs present, there were a great number of the influential men. I used as interpreters, Phlebus, my new waggon-driver, a missionary schoolmaster, and a Griqua: these all spoke Hottentot and Dutch perfectly, and the last two a little English also. I knew enough Dutch myself to be able to check any gross mistake in the rendering from English to that language, and the three interpreters were checks upon one another in the rest. The schoolmaster spoke; the others interrupted if he was not accurate.

We met together more than once. The meetings were long and very orderly, many people speaking, and all to the point. These men evidently felt they had gone much too far, and openly acknowledged that the system of robbing had done much mischief to themselves. No planting or sowing was going on; the Hottentots were idle and restless; there was no law in the country; and the Damaras harassed them with frequent retaliation. They begged me to suggest some system on which they could proceed; and also to draw

up some laws which would at least meet the common cases of cattle robbing and murder. I was rather diffident of success; but in these wild parts a trained legislator is hardly to be expected to travel, and the best must be made of what materials are at hand; so being convinced that I had already gained a favourable footing amongst them, and that what I said would be attended to, I thought the matter well over, and made my *début* as a lawgiver.

As every one of my new friends were robbers by profession it would never do to make much ado about theft, for if I did nobody would enforce the law. I therefore simply made theft finable at double the number of oxen stolen, together with a mulct upon the people of the werft to which the criminal belonged, if, as was usually the case, they concealed him. The spoor is so certain and honest a witness, and facts become so notorious, that there is little difficulty about questions of evidence. In this spirit I drew up a few laws which Cornelius and Jonker discussed, and to which they fully assented. I also endeavoured to restrain the jealousies and quarrels between the Oerlams and Hottentots by inducing Cornelius and Jonker to make a mutual agreement that criminals should be punished by the captain of the country where the crime was committed, and not, as heretofore, by his own captains.

The greater part of the Hottentots about me had that peculiar set of features which is so characteristic of bad characters in England, and so general among prisoners that it is usually, I believe, known

by the name of the "felon-face;" I mean that they have prominent cheek bones, bullet shaped head, cowering but restless eyes, and heavy sensual lips, and added to this a shackling dress and manner. The ladies have not universally that very remarkable development which was so striking in Petrus' wife at Barmen. It is a peculiarity which disappears when one of the parents have European blood, while other points, more especially the absence of white at the root of the finger nails, remain after many crosses with the Dutch. Some few of the lads and girls have remarkably pleasing Chinese-looking faces.

Jonker is decidedly a talented man, and seems in full vigour though upwards of sixty years of age; his remarks were particularly shrewd, and his descriptions concise and graphic. He came out quite as a diplomatist in the long conversations I had with him, artfully trying to turn the conversation to his own ends. I could not make out that there were more than forty horses belonging to Jonker and his men; neither they nor any others would sell me one; they said they could not possibly spare them. Those I had seen were sorry, half-starved creatures, but with many good points about them. They were all from the country about the Orange River. I endeavoured to appoint a general meeting at Schmelen's Hope for the Hottentot and Damara chiefs, where I would feed them well, and cement peace between them, as far as such an affair could do it. A time was fixed—about a fortnight thence—but it never came off. Everybody mistrusted his neighbours, and only Swartboy, who was my guest

there for a couple weeks, was present. Kahikenè sent a very friendly message, and I was quite enough satisfied with what I had done. The missionaries were highly gratified at my good fortune, and I had great pleasure in sending to Mr. Kolbe the apology and the promise that I had made Jonker write to him.

Matters now looked more sunshiny. There were nearly 100 oxen in my krail, and 60 or 70 sheep. My waggon driver, who had stolen and who latterly had been insolent, I paid in articles of exchange and dismissed. Gabriel at his own wish was left behind. A dozen Damaras agreed to go with us up the country, and Kahikenè, our friend, lay in our way. Hans and I rodè short exploring excursions to find a road by which we could take the waggon out of the bed of the Swakop, and found one with great difficulty. Andersson then rode a wider sweep to see whether the country away from the Swakop looked open enough for a waggon. He went over a great deal of country, and returned with favourable news in five days, but he hardly saw a Damara, the land was so thinly peopled. We then made ready for our start, though the five mules had run quite away; they were traced through Barmen and Otjimbinguè to Tsobis, a distance of more than 100 miles, and there the chase was given up. I may as well anticipate my story and mention that they, or rather three of them, arrived at Scheppmansdorf; they had crossed the Naanip plain by instinct. The whole distance these runaways had travelled by themselves, viz., that from Schmelen's Hope to Scheppmansdorf, is eighty-five hours' travel very nearly, which at

the rate of two-and-a-half miles per hour gives 212 miles.

A few incidents occurred at Schmelen's Hope; first a plague of caterpillars that covered the ground, then a swarm, but not an utterly destructive one, of locusts, and, lastly, a flight of migratory storks, who made great war upon the locusts. We were perpetually teased by some hyenas—they came most impudently in amongst us as their peculiar spoors showed (the hind and fore feet being of unequal size), but we never could catch them; at last the dogs overtook one on a bright moonlight night and held him at bay. I was asleep and was quite undressed when their sharp barks awoke me, and I had only time to put on my shoes. The dogs and hyena were on the other side of the Swakop, which here is exceedingly broad, about 300 yards, and by the time we had floundered through the sand to the other side the animal had retreated among the rocks and hakis thorns into the deep shade, but the dogs held well to him. I sorely regretted the leather trowsers that were left behind, as my bare legs were scarified and bleeding. I could not see the hyena, except one glimpse when he brushed against my leg. At last the dogs surrounded him in a patch of moonshine, four or five feet from where I was, and I put a bullet through his back bone. The chase and the skurry made as exciting a piece of sport as I ever witnessed. We had some rifle shooting at geese and ducks, and Andersson slew a pan—the African bustard, and probably the best flavoured and most tender game that exists: John Morta cooked it with the utmost

skill. I had returned from Jonker's on the 8th of February, and for three weeks we remained at Schmelen's Hope, waiting for the Damara chiefs, breaking-in the oxen and hoping for the rains. It is a charming place, and almost a sufficiency of game was killed to feed us.

CHAPTER V.

Personnel.—Commissariat.—Daily Allowances.—Start on the Expedition.—Damara Obtuseness.—Inability to Count.—Information withheld.—Kahikenè sends to us.—Arrive on the high Table-Land.—Superstitions on Food.—Meet Kahikenè.—His Difficulties.—Gives me Advice.—Information about the Road.—Four Oxen Stolen.—The Culprits are Punished.—Recognising Lost Oxen.—Hear of another Road.—Reach Omatako.—African Puma.—Eshuameno.—Chipping the Front Teeth.—View from the Hill.—Ja Kabaca.—Climb Omuvereoom.—A Snake.—Seriously obstructed by the Thorns.—Reach Otjironjuba.—How to make Soap.—We catch some Bushmen.—Learn a little and travel on.—Doubts about our route.—Arrive at a Werft.—Are guided onwards.—Omanbondè.—Hippopotami.

THE morning of March the 3rd found us packed up, and starting for our exploring journey. We tugged along the heavy Swakop sand, and outspanned after three hours at a fountain, passing at length into a country which, I believe, no European eye had ever before witnessed.

I may now review our caravan: it consisted of two waggons, both filled with things; the large one had a solid deck over all, and was curtained into two compartments; Andersson slept in the front one and I in the back if the ground was wet. Spare guns were lashed inside this waggon, and canvass bags for books and for other etceteras, but we could never make the

waggon a place to read in with any comfort, for it was far too full of articles of exchange. The small waggon was the receptacle for the men's sleeping clothes, besides its regular freight. Nobody slept in it except during heavy rains. John St. Helena drove the large waggon and led the way; Phlebus the small one. John Williams, Onesimus, and John Allen were all engaged as leaders, but in practice Onesimus always led the large waggon and any odd Damara led the other. Hans, John Morta and Timboo were the remaining servants. My natives were constantly changing. I am quite unable to give the names of the Ghou Damups, for two reasons: the first, perhaps a sufficient one, is that they are totally unpronounceable to any European mouth, and altogether beyond the powers of our alphabet to represent; —the second, that they were invariably christened afresh by my men as soon as they entered my service. The sort of names these negroes answered to will perhaps convey a better notion of their character and style than a longer description—there was a "Grub," a "Scrub," a "Nicodemus," a "Moonshine," and a "Toby." The Damaras generally retained their own names; they were much the more stylish of the two. My Damara party at starting was something as follows:—

Name.	Use.	Where from.
Kambanya	Generally useful	"Given" me by Mr. Hahn.
"Rhinoster"	A Guide	Hired from Otjimbingue.
"Bill"	Andersson's henchman	Picked up by chance.
Kernerootie	Excellent runner, used on every emergency	Sent me by Mr. Rath.
Kahoni	Anything	Picked up by chance.
Old Kahoni	Nothing	" " "
His Son	Cattle Watcher	" " "
Piet from Mozambique	Conversational	Timboo's friend, a runaway slave.

The grown-up ladies were the wives of Kambanya, "Rhinoster," and old Kahoni. There were numbers of occasions on which I should have turned old Kahoni away, if he had not been possessed of a little daughter, the nicest, merriest, and slimmest of Damara girls, about eight or nine years old. She won my heart, and I was obliged to tolerate the rest of the family that I might retain her. Besides these twelve I have mentioned, there were two or three others, hangers-on, whom I have forgotten, and perhaps never knew, and the women had three babies, so my party may be considered as about ten Europeans and eighteen natives, or twenty-eight in all.

As regards commissariat, my biscuit and every kind of vegetable food was eaten up. I had much too great a weight to carry to be enabled to lade the waggons with provisions also. I had plenty of tea, coffee, and a very little sugar; there were some few trifles besides. The oxen and sheep we drove with us were to be our sustenance, and they alone, excepting now and then a chance head of game. If these oxen strayed by night, and were lost, we should be little better than the crew of a ship in the broad Pacific, who had broached their last cask. The charge of these quadrupeds was now to be my anxiety and care, day and night, for a loose ox in Damara land is as quickly appropriated as a dropped sovereign in the streets of London.

In estimating cattle as so many days' provision, the calculation I acted on was as follows. A sheep gives twenty meals, no bread or other vegetables being

allowed, and a man cannot work *well* with less than two meals a-day. A sheep therefore feeds ten people for one day. An average ox is equivalent to seven sheep, and it therefore feeds seventy people for one day, or thirty-five for two, or twenty-four for three. I cannot accurately say what the quantity of food is that different kinds of game afford, as waste always goes on when one is slaughtered, but, as a rough allowance, I considered—

1 Springbok, or roebuck . . .	equal to	1	sheep.
1 Hartebeest	„	2	„
1 Zebra, or gnu, or gemsbok . .	„	4	„
1 Giraffe	„	2	oxen.
1 Black or Keitloa rhinoceros . .	„	3	„
1 White	„	4	„

I possessed seventy-five oxen and one calf; of these fifty-seven had been inspanned, including the ride and pack oxen. My ride-oxen were Frieschland, Ceylon, Timmerman, Buchau and Fairland. Andersson had Spring. All these would also carry packs as a matter of course, but there were others simply pack-oxen. Hans had three ride-oxen, six cows, and five calves; John Allen had two ride-oxen. There were also two heifers that belonged to some of the other men. Gross total of oxen, and cows and calves, ninety-four; but my own flock of sheep was reduced to twenty-four. I had therefore (allowing twenty slaughter oxen) full provisions for two and a half months for all my party, independently of game. This was not nearly as much as I should have liked, but I trusted to buy more on my journey, and also to get some shooting.

March 4th.—This was our most difficult day: the Swakop ran through a gorge so broken and narrow, as not to admit a waggon, and the only road we could find out of it lay for some considerable distance along a narrow ridge of jagged rock with a precipitous fall on our left. Hakis thorns and ravines made the country quite impenetrable everywhere else; our road was horrible; the waggon crashed and thundered and thumped, but somehow or other got safe over. If I had to undergo two or three more such days of journeyings, the waggons would have to be left behind. The oxen were dreadfully wild; there was no guiding or restraining them down hill, but they tossed themselves about and charged like wild buffaloes; it still took us an hour and a half to inspan the two waggons, and every man was actively employed. We went only three hours, and slept at the furthest watering-place that Hans and I had explored. Now we had to trust to the guides, whose ideas of time and distance were most provokingly indistinct; besides this, they have no comparative in their language, so that you cannot say to them, "which is the *longer* of the two, the next stage or the last one?" but you must say, "the last stage is little; the next, is it great?" The reply is not, it is a "little longer," "much longer," or "very much longer;" but simply, "it is so," or "it is not so." They have a very poor notion of time. If you say, "Suppose we start at sunrise, where will the sun be when we arrive?" they make the wildest points in the sky, though they are something of astronomers, and give names to several stars.

They have no way of distinguishing days, but reckon by the rainy season, the dry season, or the pig-nut season. When inquiries are made about how many days' journey off a place may be, their ignorance of all numerical ideas is very annoying. In practice, whatever they may possess in their language, they certainly use no numeral greater than three. When they wish to express four, they take to their fingers, which are to them as formidable instruments of calculation as a sliding-rule is to an English school-boy. They puzzle very much after five, because no spare hand remains to grasp and secure the fingers that are required for "units." Yet they seldom lose oxen: the way in which they discover the loss of one, is not by the number of the herd being diminished, but by the absence of a face they know. When bartering is going on, each sheep must be paid for separately. Thus, suppose two sticks of tobacco to be the rate of exchange for one sheep, it would sorely puzzle a Damara to take two sheep and give him four sticks. I have done so, and seen a man first put two of the sticks apart and take a sight over them at one of the sheep he was about to sell. Having satisfied himself that that one was honestly paid for, and finding to his surprise that exactly two sticks remained in hand to settle the account for the other sheep, he would be afflicted with doubts; the transaction seemed to come out too "pat" to be correct, and he would refer back to the first couple of sticks, and then his mind got hazy and confused, and wandered from one sheep to the other, and he broke off the transaction

until two sticks were put into his hand and one sheep driven away, and then the other two sticks given him and the second sheep driven away. When a Damara's mind is bent upon number, it is too much occupied to dwell upon quantity; thus a heifer is bought from a man for ten sticks of tobacco; his large hands being both spread out upon the ground, and a stick placed on each finger, he gathers up the tobacco; the size of the mass pleases him, and the bargain is struck. You then want to buy a second heifer: the same process is gone through, but half sticks instead of whole ones are put upon his fingers; the man is equally satisfied at the time, but occasionally finds it out and complains the next day. Once, while I watched a Damara floundering hopelessly in a calculation on one side of me, I observed Dinah, my spaniel, equally embarrassed on the other. She was overlooking half a dozen of her new-born puppies, which had been removed two or three times from her, and her anxiety was excessive, as she tried to find out if they were all present, or if any were still missing. She kept puzzling and running her eyes over them backwards and forwards, but could not satisfy herself. She evidently had a vague notion of counting, but the figure was too large for her brain. Taking the two as they stood, dog and Damara, the comparison reflected no great honour on the man. Hence, as the Damaras had the vaguest notions of time and distance, and as their language was a poor vehicle for expressing what ideas they had, and, lastly, as truth-telling was the exception and not the rule,

I found their information to be of very little practical use.

I had spent more hours than an untravelled European would easily give me credit for, in questioning and cross-questioning Damaras about the distances we had to go over. Mr. Hahn and Mr. Rath severally, at Barmen and Otjimbinguè, had helped me to the utmost of their ability, and yet, on starting, I could not tell whether Omanbondè lay five days off or six weeks. As a proof of the extreme difficulty of worming out facts from the Damaras, I may mention that Okandu Fountain, which lay only five miles from Schmelen's Hope, and where we slept the first day, was unknown by the missionaries. At Schmelen's Hope itself there is only vley (pool) water and wells, which a dry season might exhaust, and though abounding in grass, trees, and garden land, the place was reluctantly abandoned, and the head-quarters of the Mission were established at Barmen, which has much fewer natural advantages. When Mr. Kolbe, at a subsequent period, went to Schmelen's Hope, he merely occupied it as a branch station. Now, constant inquiries have been made for years as to whether there were any fountains near Schmelen's Hope, but without success, and yet this one, lying in full sight and right in the middle of the river-bed, had never been spoken of to the Missionaries or discovered by them. This is not at all an isolated case of the difficulty of getting the information you want from the savages; they are intensely stupid, and lie for lying's sake. One man at Otjimbinguè told me,

that if I started now to Omanbondè, and travelled as fast as I could, it would take me so long that I should be an old man when I came back.

My plan of journeying was this; to move steadily on, and whenever I came across water, after three hours' travel, to stop; in this way my oxen would keep fresh for any severe exertion they might be called upon to make, and I should also have more time to learn particulars about the country, which would be of essential use if I returned in the dry season. The necks of the oxen had also to become hardened to the yoke; if a raw was established the beast would be useless.

On the third day's travel, the long slope, which is the watershed of the Swakop, was surmounted, and quite new scenery lay before us. In front rose the two magnificent cones of Omatako, each appearing as perfect as that of Teneriffe; to the far left were many broken mountains, some of which must look down upon Erongo; more northerly lay the long escarpment of another Ghou Damup mountain, Koniati; and to the westward of north, a very distant blue hill was seen, which had to be passed on our way to Omanbondè. The sandy soil was covered with thin dry grass, and a scanty thorn coppice, without underwood, overspread the land.

As we travelled on, some messengers met us. They were sent from the Chief Kahikenè, who begged me to visit him. He lay at a large vley in front, whither he had moved to meet me. The messenger brought a magnificent black ox as a present from him;

it was larger than any in my drove, though I had some fine ones amongst them.

We had now finally lost sight of Jonker's hills and all the broken ground of the Swakop, the summits of whose highest mountains were below us. We had mounted steadily up, and were journeying on a high plateau 6000 feet above the level of the sea, as measured by a boiling-point thermometer. On this plateau Omatako, Koniati, and other hills stood. Almost immediately after leaving a large tributary of the Swakop, we came upon a river-bed, running in exactly the opposite direction, and this we followed; it is called Okaroschekè, or "naked" river—the story being, that one rainy season, when the water was flowing waist-high, some Damara women tried to cross it to get at the berry-trees which grew on the opposite bank, and stripped to do so, leaving their skin aprons on the ground; when they were on the other side a torrent of water came down which swept their aprons away, and left them without clothing. The Damaras are very particular about wearing something, however little it may be, and look upon complete nakedness as a great disgrace. Another somewhat refined practice that they have is, that no hunger will drive them to eat raw or even underdone meat. They have numberless superstitions about meat, which are very troublesome: in the first place, each tribe, or rather family, is prohibited from eating cattle of certain colours, savages "who come from the sun" eschewing sheep spotted in a particular way, which those "who come from the rain" have no objection to. As there are

five or six different "eandas" or descents, and I had men from most of them with me, I could hardly ever kill a sheep that everybody would eat; many were martyrs for a long time to their consciences, but hunger converted them all at last. Goats are an abomination to every Damara, whatever his eanda may be. Another superstition is that meat is common property. Every slaughter is looked upon as a kind of sacrifice or festal occasion. Damaras cannot conceive that people should eat meat as their daily food. Their chiefs kill an ox when a stranger comes, or half a dozen oxen on a birth or circumcision feast, or any great event, and then everybody present shares the meat. When I stayed near werfts I could not at first ensure my men getting food enough to eat, for the strange Damaras came about them and begged their share, "cursing" them if they refused. The curse is supposed to have a withering and blighting effect. For this reason meat is never an article of exchange at anything like its real value in Damara land. A freshly killed ox would not buy a live sheep. Damaras have a great respect, almost reverence, for oxen. They keep them to look at, as we keep fallow deer; and though a nine-shilling gun will buy five fine oxen, yet that is no proof of the cheapness of cattle with the Damaras, but rather of the dearness of guns amongst them. Any man, not himself possessed of cattle, may be murdered without fear of the consequences, if payment of two oxen be made to his relations, as that by the custom of the country is amply sufficient blood-money. Milk, the great article of diet among.

the richer Damaras, though used in such profusion, can rarely be bought, for there are some superstitions about it also. Each Damara, who lives entirely or chiefly on milk, the rest of his food being pig-nuts, drinks from one to two gallons daily. Now it is reasonable to suppose that a day's provision of meat would be exchangeable for one of milk, especially as meat is more prized, and the greater dainty of the two; but it is not so, nor indeed anything like it. If a head of game be shot and bartered with the natives, it will be found a difficult matter to obtain a single gallon of milk for a whole gnu or zebra. Sweet milk can hardly be ever obtained, because Damaras, like all other milk-drinking nations, use it only when sour, and the cow is milked into the tainted vessels. They firmly believe that a cow's milk will fail her if they milk her into anything freshly washed and clean. The milk of these cows actually does fail them if the calf be taken away. It is the same with those in parts of South America.

March 12th.—We had arrived at the place where Kahikenè waited for us. He and about forty magnificently made and well-armed Damaras were standing under the trees. As the waggons came near, the men all fell into a single file, according to their usual custom, which Kahikenè headed, and they walked up to me. He had quite the manners of a chief, and received me very well. I gave him some gilt ornaments as presents, which, although he was in mourning, he put on in compliment to me: the Damaras strip off their ornaments when in mourning.

He had been in great distresses of late. After Jonker had attacked him, and scattered his people at Schmelen's Hope, Omagundè's son, who was encamped two days in front of us, followed up the attack, and killed some of his children, and took others prisoners, leaving only one lad with him. The greater number of his oxen were also taken, and he was left almost destitute, with but the remnant of a tribe, and was now about to make a last desperate attack upon his enemy. A few years ago, Kahikenè was the most powerful chief in Damara-land, and, like Katjimasha, had once allied himself with, and afterwards had separated from, Jonker. Subsequent to this separation, Jonker attacked him, and he made a bold retaliation the next night. Ever since that he had been a marked man with the Hottentots, and werft after werft of his had been swept away, until he was reduced to the condition in which I found him.

He was the only friend among the Damaras that the missionaries ever had, and his friendliness and frankness to me and my men interested all of us without exception most thoroughly in his favour.

He had brought his men together to make one quick and last attack upon the werft of Omagundè's son, and the usual superstitious ceremony was gone through of dragging a berry bush after him wherever he went. I offered to go to Omagundè's son and see if I could not get his children and some oxen back for him; for it is a very common custom among the Damaras that when one tribe has utterly ruined another they should then give them back a part of what they had taken, as an

act of clemency, which should secure them against retaliation; and it was but natural that Damara chiefs should pay some little deference to my mediation, since I had just checked the Hottentots from laying hands on their cattle. But Kahikenè was too proud to receive back part and compromise the matter, though he said that he knew his expedition was but a forlorn hope, and that he would be killed. He said that his best soldiers were gone, and that those with him were but arrant cowards, who would leave him at the first danger. He made these complimentary speeches quite loud, while all his men were sitting around us. He showed us all the scars and cuts with which he was covered, and gave the history of them in an easy chatty way. He criticised my arrangements, and said that I was much too careless in the way I travelled and encamped—that I ought never to allow many Damaras to mix in with my men, because if they made one of their sudden attacks I should be overpowered directly. He recommended the greatest caution in trusting the Damaras. I knew too well the truth of much that he said, but my waggon-men were far too negligent for me to keep up anything like the discipline I should have wished amongst them. At very little trifles they were ready to show discontent, and if I had pushed them too much they would have turned back and left me. Kahikenè assured me, and I had heard from other quarters also, that Omagundè's son would not let us pass through his country. I wished to send messengers to him, but no Damara dared to go. His feelings were anything but favourable towards whites;

not long before he had sent men who stole Mr. Hahn's cattle. After a great deal of expostulation had passed he condescended to return them, but cut their tails off before doing so, and kept them as trophies.

I asked Kahikenè about the country ahead, and he gave me much information very concisely and well; his intellect and manner contrasted most strongly with those of the other Damaras. Indeed a chief over many men, whether savages or not, must have something in him, or he could never keep them together. He said that he used to send trading excursions to the Ovampo, but not by Omanbondè, and to quite a different part of their country to that which I proposed visiting. His trading parties kept alongside but far from the sea. There were different points on the route from which it could be seen. The journey to the Ovampo occupied two months (moons). The men stayed one month there and then returned. The Damaras were friendly along that route, and so were they at Omanbondè, but between where we then were and Omanbondè, Omagundè's tribe cut off all communication. He said that the road was very broken, and that I should never get my waggons along it.

An incident occurred in which Kahikenè behaved very well to me. One morning three of my best front oxen and another slaughter ox were gone. They were instantly spoored, and the tracks of Damaras driving them found by their sides. I called Kahikenè up and told him that I did not for a moment believe that he was privy to the theft, but that they were taken from me when under his protection, and that he must get

them back. I am sure that he was very much touched by my giving him credit for sincerity, for of late he had been hearing of nothing else but distrust and desertion on every side. He sent instantly after the cattle, and half a dozen of my own Damaras went also. My men returned after a day's absence, as they were afraid of going further, but Kahikenè's men had kept to the spoor. Intelligence at length came that three of the four oxen were recovered, and one front ox had been killed; six thieves were taken and were detained a little distance off till further orders. Kahikenè regretted extremely the loss of the front ox; he said he knew that it was as disastrous an accident to our team as cutting off a leg is to a man, but that any oxen of his that I chose to take were quite at my service. Then as to what should be done with the thieves; he looked about him till a stout horizontal bough of one of the large camelthorn trees caught his eye, and he proposed to hang them in a row upon it. Against this scheme I used all my eloquence, as I did not like such strong measures; at length Kahikenè stated the case fairly enough; he said the thieves had been guilty both to me and to him—to me for the theft, to him for their audacity in taking oxen when I was under his protection; that the punishment due to them for the first part of the matter was my affair, and that I could remit it or not as I pleased, but that for his part he must vindicate his own rights. I could of course make no answer to this, so he sent men who clubbed or assegaied four of the culprits, but two escaped. I never could learn the full particulars of the matter.

Of the two that escaped one was brought to me a few days after, when I was on the road; he was brought in the evening, and I did not like punishing and letting him go then, as he might revenge himself in the night. It is not easy to secure a powerful supple-limbed negro, so that he cannot slip loose, but in this case I handcuffed his wrists, one on each side of the stem of a tree, and made my fire near him that he might not be too much chilled during the night, and in the morning I gave him a most severe flogging and let him go. One of the four culprits who had been left for dead we also found. He was fearfully bruised with the clubs, and perfectly stripped, but had crawled to the same watering place—a vley—that I was encamped at. His punishment had been, I thought, amply sufficient, and I gave him a meal, and let him go, but I sadly fear, from what I heard long subsequently, that some of my Damaras followed and assegaied him.

Kahikenè's men had in the meantime frightened mine about Omagundè's people, and they were quite panic-struck and mutinous, and fairly refused to go any further. Andersson here was of the greatest assistance to me. He would have accompanied me alone, and Timboo I think would not have failed us. The waggon-men knew I was in their power. If the cattle had been moderately tame, and the country at all open, Andersson and I could ourselves have taken the waggons back to Barmen, and, leaving them there, ridden on; but the character of the expedition and of the country made us as dependent on a large body of men as a frigate is upon a large crew. Hans had not

been long enough with me to become thoroughly attached to my cause, and he had a very disagreeable time of service, owing to the laziness and jealousies of the waggon men, and would then have been very glad to have discontinued it. I earnestly longed to place a broad tract of country between me and the Mission stations, and then I knew that the waggon-men would hesitate before they ran away and crossed it alone. I persuaded the men, instead of going north through the hostile country, to turn to the left and travel westwards to Kahikenè's head-quarters. We passed by a great many kraals, in few of which were there more than ten houses, generally only five or six — probably 100 head of cattle and not more, belonged to each kraal. Of these, twenty or thirty were the chief's own property, taken care of by the people who occupied the huts, together with the other oxen which were their own. The perquisites for taking care of the chief's cattle consisted of the milk of the cows, and occasionally a calf or lamb.

The Damaras have a wonderful faculty of recollecting any ox that they have once seen, and whenever I came to a new werft the natives always went up and down among my oxen to see if any that had been stolen from them were among the number. I found a great advantage in having bought the majority of mine from Hans, for they had been in his hands for four years, and no Damara could lay a claim to any of them, but in those I bought myself I had to be very careful, as they were pretty sure to have been stolen at some time or another, and might, according to the custom of

the land, be reclaimed at any moment by their former possessors.

Hans and John Allen were very quick at recollecting oxen: I never could succeed in doing so myself: but it is perfectly essential to a traveller here that some trustworthy persons of his party should be able to pick out his own oxen from any drove in which they have become mixed; for, depend upon it, the strange Damaras will give no help on those occasions. When fresh oxen are bought, the old ones butt and fight them for a few days before admitting them into their society, and during the time of probation the new oxen are always trying to run off and get home again. Now the tribe from whom they were bought may be lying at eight or ten scattered kraals, to any one of which the ox that had been bought but a few hours before and seen for a few minutes only, may have made his escape. He has to be picked out from among 500 or 600 head of cattle, and this the Damaras can do with perfect certainty. They do not seem to know the sheep or to care much about them, but their thoughts and conversation run upon oxen for the greater part of the day.

By dint of excessive badgering and cross-questioning I found out that it might be possible after all to turn Omagundè's flank. I had now two or three Damaras who had once been that way, and my men were willing to go on. We bought a few oxen here. Some zebras were shot and given to Kahikenè's people. He made a last endeavour to persuade me not to go up the country, but in vain; and we separated with some regret, I going on my journey and he to his hopeless attempt

against Omagundè's people. I took a few men from his werft, and by dint of constant bartering, started with 100 oxen, twenty-seven goats and thirty sheep. Poor Kahikenè! of all the Damaras I saw in my year and a half journey, none had so thoroughly ingratiated himself with my party as he had. We tolerated a few others, but became really attached to him.

March 18th.—The high cones of Omatako were full in front of us, and the next wells were a long distance on the other side; however we met with pools of rain water and trekked on in three or four hour stages. At one place John Morta was beginning to make his fire under a bush, when he retreated in great alarm, as he found the place occupied by a puff-adder. The next day we saw our first herd of wild animals; I counted about 100 hartebeests in one place, and Andersson 400 gnus in another. We shot some game, and Andersson started what he thought was a puma. The natives talk a great deal about such an animal existing; they describe it as a very shy creature, and hardly ever moving about in the daytime, of the same colour and general shape as a lion, but smaller, and with no mane. The animal Andersson caught a glimpse of answered the description perfectly. It might have been a young lion, but its movements were not those of a cub. It jumped up close by him, but was among the thick bushes and out of sight before there was time to fire.

We had a very fatiguing day in going round Omatako. The ground was open, but heavy, and the oxen sadly exhausted. We came to a small river-bed

on the other side of it, which Andersson had reached in his long ride from Schmelen's Hope, and encamped by a pool of water that remained in that part of its course. The stream was running breast high with water when Andersson saw it, but it was now utterly dry.

The next day, after crossing the river-bed with difficulty, as its banks were so high, we arrived at the wells that we had heard of, and to which the Damaras guided us straight enough. Now was the question how to proceed; we had been travelling due north from Kahikenè's werft, but the next certain water-place was by a hill (Ja Kabaca) that looked very distant indeed to the north-east, and the sun was so powerful and the ground so sandy, that vley water could in no way be depended on. In front of us, to the north, was the hill Eshuameno, so called from a grand feast the Damaras once held there, on occasion of "chipping" the front teeth of a number of children. Most negroes, as is well known, chip their teeth, and in different ways, according to their tribe. The Damaras knock out a wedge-shaped gap between their two front teeth; the ladies say, it makes them lisp charmingly.

I left the waggons at the wells and rode on with a couple of men for five hours, till I got to Eshuameno. We found no water there, but offpacked among some thick thorns, where the most pitch dark of nights brought us to a stand-still. In the morning I went up the hill, both to view the country and to get bearings of Ja Kabaca, by which I could determine its

distance from the waggons, and whether or no it would be practicable to reach it in a single stage, should water fail us. I was very anxious about the matter, so I took a protractor up the hill with me, and protracted all my bearings on the spot, by which I had a better idea of the country than I could obtain before for want of well-selected observing stations. I had a very wide prospect indeed from the top of Eshuameno. Southwards I could clearly see Diambotodthu, which is only some twenty-five miles from Schmelen's Hope. Northward extended a wide flat of the most barren country. There seemed to be no grass whatever upon it, but it was studded over with low scrubby bushes; while eastwards, in which direction we had to travel, the ground was covered with trees and grass. The results of the survey were satisfactory to me, and I determined to risk going across the plain to Ja Kabaca. I was assured of plenty of water being found there. As we returned the rain fell in torrents, in a perfect sheet of water. This was delightful, as it would fill the vleys for us; but we felt rather cold and hungry when we arrived, after our five hours' ride through it. The little waggon was too full of things for the men to use it for shelter, but they had contrived some tenting, which was sufficient for the occasion.

March 22nd.—We were again *en route*. In four hours a fine vley was discovered, and there of course I stopped. I cannot take liberties with my oxen; they are disheartened as easily as my men, and I am always afraid of their sticking in the bushes. As for the

men, they drink like fishes. I can only carry four meals of water for them.

The next day we arrived at some large wells, in which again there was a sufficiency of water. The cattle were very restless at night, and constantly straying; Hans preferred their lying loose and picking up grass during the night to making a kraal, but I was sadly afraid that some morning they might be missing, and have fallen into the hands of Omagundè's people. Except my cattle, I had not one day's provision; no biscuit, no flour, nor anything of the sort; I felt that I had now committed myself in earnest. There was no certain water between these wells and where I first met Kahikenè. A month of drought would exhaust every vley on the road, and then unless I rode right through Omagundè's country, the journey would be quite impossible even for ride-oxen. I told a great many stories, I am afraid, to my men. I impressed upon them the certainty of soon arriving at a better country, and talked a great deal about some large fountains near Omatako, as a baiting place on our way home, but which I had not really much faith in.

The next day, by starting early and keeping a steady even pace, we arrived at Ja Kabaca, and passing along its rugged base and between it and Omuvereoom, arrived late in the afternoon at a wretched vley, which we discovered after an anxious search. It would be a waste of time to enlarge on the horrible stuff one often had to drink at these small vleys, as it can so easily be conceived. Fancy a shallow pool from ten to twenty yards across, and from six to twelve inches

deep, in which a herd of wild animals, say fifty zebras, have been splashing and rolling themselves all night, and which they have left in every respect like the water pumped out of a farm-yard; and where wild animals are wanting, the oxen, in spite of every precaution, will do the same.

The two mountains between which we were now encamped, Omuvereoom and Ja Kabaca, were said to be great strongholds of Bushmen and Ghou Damup, so Hans, Andersson, and I, made an expedition up the first of these, to see if we could catch any, and persuade or compel them to guide us. The first name means "a door," or "a pass;" the second is derived from a proper name.

Since leaving Kahikenè we had not seen a single person beyond our own party. We rode our oxen to the foot of Omuvereoom, which was about an hour and a half off, and leaving them with our Damaras, went up a hill, in some parts the most rugged that I ever climbed. We first steered for a green patch, in which the telescopes had shown us water: there we found deserted huts, but nothing else, neither could we see any recent tracks; but at one place, hearing what we thought was a halloo, Hans and I scampered up hill after it. I was utterly blown, and had just mounted up on a kind of natural step, when, while I was balancing myself, I found that I had put my foot on the tail of a great dark-green snake, who was up in an instant, with his head as high as my chest, and confronting me. I had, though used up with my run, just sense and quickness enough left to leap over the side

of the rock, and came with a great tumble among some bushes; the snake, too, came over after me, I can hardly suppose in chase, because he did not follow me when we were at the bottom together; but I ran after him a long way, for I was not hurt, throwing stones at the reptile. A Damara, who was some way behind, was carrying my gun, and I had not even a stick.

Resuming our search, we came to where the hill was so broken that I could not get on. Huge jagged rough stones, many as big as a small house, were piled up, and thrown about in all directions, with deep fissures between them; just the place for a man to fall and break his legs. We found altogether two or three small fountains, but no people. There were some giraffe-spoors high on the hills. Giraffes are wonderful climbers: koodoos are the best; but I think that giraffes come next to them, even before the zebras. From the hill we swept the country with our telescopes, and caught the glimmer of distant water between the trees: there was to be our next halt. The Damaras pointed north-east, as the direction of Omanbondè, but said that it still lay a great way off. We "marked" the vley as well as we could, and took the waggon there,—three hours' travel before breakfast. The water-shed was now obviously to the eastward, the distant country dropping down most perceptibly. I had been hoping to see fewer thorn-trees, but here they were worse than ever. My oxen would not face them: a single bush threw the whole team into confusion: the oxen plunged and tossed, and got their heads out of the yokes; and often the waggon-men could not get up to the fighting

creatures on account of the thorns. Flogging is of little or no use; the animal is essentially perverse and vicious, and calls for almost superhuman patience. From eleven A.M., till night-fall, we were labouring through the thorns, that threatened soon to become impervious. Our clothes and hands were sadly torn; but still we pushed on steadily. Not a blade of grass was to be seen; and when we outspanned, a pitch dark night had set in; the oxen were roaming about,—we could hardly see them in the thick cover. When the morning broke, a few oxen remained, and the rest were gone. Away went half the men, without any breakfast, running a steady pace, for we feared the oxen might get back even to Kahikenè's werft. They were overtaken beyond the vley, as they were walking steadily back. In the meantime I had gone on to see how far we were from the stream Otjironjuba, our next watering-place. To my delight, I found it close by, only an hour and a half off, full of running water, and like a trout-stream, with meadows of grass about it. It came out from a cliff of Omuvereoom.

In the evening we brought the waggons up, and encamped beside it, about two miles from the hill. Here we staid two days, in happy idleness, climbing the hill, bathing, shooting francolines, and having a good clothes-washing.

I must here make a digression on the subject of soap, an article that we had to make for ourselves, as I found that I had not brought nearly enough from Cape Town. This is one instance out of a vast number in which the missionary or the traveller is

thrown upon his own resources. Our process of making it took a week or ten days to complete. It was as follows: the cook having saved as much fat as he could from the meat, until his store accumulated to half a bucket-full, or more, and a great quantity of wood, or shrub-ashes, having been collected, those plants alone being used whose ashes taste acrid, a savage was set to work at making two very large clay pots, which is an easy thing to do when proper clay can be obtained; in one of these we put the ashes, and let water stand upon them; in the other, under which a fire-place was built, we placed the fat. A Damara of sedentary disposition was then employed to superintend the process to the end, he or she having simply to keep up the fire under the grease-pot, and from time to time to ladle into it a spoonfull of the ash-water, or ley. This ash-water is sucked up by the grease; and in ten days the stuff is transformed into good white soap. The difficulty lies in selecting proper ashes. Those of most plants make the soap too hard; those of others too soft; but when the *juste milieu* is hit, all goes on excellently. The missionaries have now brought their soap-making to perfection; they only use the ashes of two plants, both of which grow in abundance near Otjimbinguè; and practice has taught them the exact proportion in which they should be mixed to make "a superior article."

From the top of Omuvereoom, about Otjironjuba, nothing but a wide bushy extent could be seen. The brook sprang from several boggy spots, and fell in pretty cascades down the hill.

March 29th.—We started very early from our agreeable resting-place, and followed the Otjironjuba: it soon disappeared in its sandy bed; and after three hours the country had become so arid, that I outspanned, to let the oxen take a good drink at the last pool of water we could see. The rain now came down in such deluges that the harness, of undressed leather, became too soppy to handle, and the men could not hold the oxen in the reins when they had caught them; so we stopped there all night.

March 30th.—We again started early, and strayed a great deal; for we had no certain point to aim for, and our chief object was endeavouring to avoid the thorns. The guides were sulky, and could not, or would not, tell us anything. We pulled on for many hours with thick thorn-bushes about us, and not a drop of water to be seen, as the sandy soil had sucked up the rain: however, the oxen went well. Towards evening we turned down a long vista, and the waggon was moving noiselessly over the soft ground, when we saw five or six Bushmen and women squatted in a row on the ground, with their backs towards us, crowing pig-nuts. They did not see us till we were close upon them. We caught a man and woman, and made them show us the water. A little man, who got away from us, was very funny, and stuck to his wife manfully. He danced about her with a bow and arrow, making offers to shoot at us, and was in a wonderfully excited state of mind. We did not approve of the arrow, and let him and his wife go their ways. These people were thorough Namaquas in feature, but darker in colour, exactly like the

Walfisch Bay people. The man we caught was tall, certainly above six feet. One sees now and then very tall, bony men among the Hottentots; though, as a race, they are diminutive. He had his wallet full of young birds, just taken out of the nest, linnets and such-like, to eat. He gave us much better information than the Damaras. Phlebus said that the man talked backwards and forwards, and that he could hardly make out what he said. Anyhow, when he did, the answers were very direct. The Bushman name for Omanbondè is Sareesab: as to its size, I heard exactly the same variety of accounts that I did among the Damaras. The man said that the water of it was as broad as the heavens; the woman, that it was perfectly dry; but both agreed that there were hippopotami in it. There could be no doubt about the animal meant; they used the ordinary Hottentot word for them, and mimicked their actions so completely, that it was evident they had seen them; and where hippopotami are there water must be. They gave us a very true account of its distance, calling it four long days for a man on foot.

Phlebus and Hans shot a brace of gemsboks. The water we slept by lay among reeds, and seemed to be the head of an ill-defined water-course, down which we went.

March 31*st*.—We picked up the gemsboks by the way, and passed a large and deep vley, in which there were some red and white geese. There are geese and ducks on every large pool of rain-water. They must be taking advantage of the rainy season, and travelling

hither in search of food. We saw a very large heron, or crane, an immense creature, and Andersson shot him. The guides sauntered about two miles behind the waggons, and the Damaras were become very slack and careless: one of them, Kahoni, was impertinent, and refused to answer me, or to do what he was told, so I had him down on the ground very quickly; but this time I did not whip him, because he became penitent and communicative.

We came to a halt at a vley, where the water-course led northerly, and the thickest of thorn-bushes penned us in elsewhere. The guides wanted us to go due south, and strike upon the Omaramba river-bed. It was on the upper part of this river-bed that Omagundè's son lay; but the point where we now should strike it would be far out of his reach. This Omoramba ran into or out of Omanbondè,—I had never been able to make out which—and there never was a want of well-water along it. We held a council on our plans; but the thorns were so thick to the southward, and the distance we had to go so uncertain,—it might be one day, it might be five,—that I abandoned the idea of attempting it. I thought the water-course we were on must be a tributary of the Omoramba, and determined to follow it, especially as its direction was straight towards our point. We were losing sight of all land-marks; nothing was to be seen but a wide undulating plain, black with dense thorn-bushes; to the west was Ja Kabaca, and by its side commenced the long range of Omuvereoom, high and escarped at first, but fining down by slow degrees towards the level of the plain.

As we continued *en route* next day, the water-course still befriended us: its bed was never sand, but hard ground, covered with sward, and here and there holding a pool of rain-water; and the thick bushes were crowded on either side. It seemed as though we were travelling along "a ride," cut through a thick cover. We now, for the first time, came upon elephant spoors,—huge things, indeed. There were about twenty tracks made where the ground was soft; but it now was hardened, and the waggon jolted heavily over them.

April 2nd.—We came upon ox-tracks, and other indications of a Damara werft, and following a path, came upon it. The men dispersed in great consternation, but we caught some women, who were too heavily laden with anklets to run fast, and pacified them with tobacco. In a short time the men came back, and we were soon excellent friends. A fine tall Damara, about six feet seven inches in height, offered, in the course of conversation, to guide us to Omanbondè. He said that we should arrive there in three days. We still were perfectly unable to understand how large the water was, as no two people said the same thing.

April 3rd.—Six hours took us to another werft. After the first two hours we left our old friend, the Vley River, as we called it; and the bushes being more open, and fewer thorn-trees among them, we followed our guide across country. The captain of this werft was a very shrewd fellow, and a jolly, humorous sort of man. He was convinced that we were Hottentot spies; but for all that, we became great friends.

At about the point where we now were Omuvereoom was identified with the plain. There were no thorns at all about here, but the country was covered with high green-leaved bushes; the wood was very brittle, so that the waggon crashed through trees whose stem was as thick as a man's thigh, and we had not to use the axes. Indeed, we have very seldom had occasion to employ them, considering the country that we have pushed through. The captain told us all sorts of tales about the Ovampo and their king, Nangoro. He had visited them two or three times. Nangoro, he said, was the fattest man in the world, and larger than either of my waggons. His size has made a great impression upon the sparely-built Damaras, for whenever I talk about him they allude to it. Every man I have talked to about the Ovampo speaks well of them.

April 4th.—We started in company with our tall guide, travelling three and a half hours—slept without water. The next day we were to reach our goal. Infinite were the conjectures on the size and appearance of Omanbondè. We had looked over my mackintosh boat to see that it was in good order, and agreed to settle on its banks and have a fortnight or three weeks pleasant shooting in return for all the trouble and annoyance that we had undergone. We tried not to expect very much of a lake for fear of disappointment, but agreed that it could not be less than fifteen miles by eight. Five hours' travelling over undulating ground brought us on the brow of a hill, below which lay a broad grassy river bed 500 yards across—this was the Omoramba; up it was a projecting rock, and round that

Omanbondè. On a hill-top in front was a cluster of camel-thorn trees, (Omanbondè means camel-thorn trees,) and below that the lake was said to lie. Forwards we went with our nerves strung to the highest pitch of excitement; we rattled the waggon on as fast as we could walk, turned the corner, but another provoking reach of the river-bed was before us. Then we plunged through a field of dry reeds, and were walking on, when the guide loitered behind and seemed to be looking about for something. The truth slowly dawned upon our minds that we were *then* in Omanbondè, and that the guide was actually looking for the water. It was really too ridiculous that our magnificent lake should be reduced to this. However there proved to be perfect truth in the story of the hippopotami. The fact is, that a country like Damara-land is as different after a heavy rainy season to what it is after a dry one, as the sea-beach is at different times of the tide. Our ill-luck was that we travelled in one of the driest years known; and Omanbondè, which is a reach of the broad Omoramba, of some nine miles long, bears every mark of having been full of water. The course of the Omoramba, as I found out long afterwards, is towards the great river of the Mationa country, and up it during the rainy season hippopotami travel; many have been killed at Omanbondè; one a few years back actually travelled up to Okaroscheke, and thence his spoor led into the Swakop, that is not more than a couple of miles apart from it. He died in the Swakop, and his carcase was washed down and eaten by the Ghou Damup at Tsobis. Many Hottentots who were

familiar with hippopotami, from having been born on the Orange River, which used to abound with them, saw fragments of the animal; Jonker told me the story and I have no reason to disbelieve it, but from the appearance of Damara-land during the dry season, one would as soon expect a hippopotamus to have travelled across the great Sahara as from Omanbondè to Tsobis. There is not a drop of water, except in wells, (which the beast could not get at,) between Omanbondè and the little fountain two hours from Schmelen's Hope. We encamped by the side of Omanbondè near some wells of excellent water, to which hundreds of desert partridges flew every night. My men had had enough of travelling, and wanted to return; however I had my own way with them. I made them what presents I could. Their shirts were torn to rags, and I served out all the calico which I had taken as an article of exchange to make them new ones. I gave an assegai to each of my Damaras, and did my best to put the men into good humour, and then made ready to go on to the Ovampo.

CHAPTER VI.

Mistake a Lion for an Antelope.—Explore a road.—Reach Palms.—Return and bring the Waggons.—Experiences of African travel.—Guide decamps and we find another.—Settle at Okambuti.—The first Elephant.—Waggon breaks down.—Encampment made.—Chapupa's history.—Savages *versus* Europeans.—Ride on to the Ovampo.—Method of searching for Water.—Damaras are bad Guides.—Find some Bushmen.—We start, but are ordered back.—The Ovampo Caravan.—Chikorongo-onkompè.—Pronunciation of the letter L.—Salt, not a necessary of life.—Damaras never eat it.—Return to Chapupa's Werft.—Arrange a present for Nangoro.—Dressed and tanned leather.—Hear of Kahikenè's death.—Damara Creed.—Kandas and Omakuru.—Ceremonies.—Huts and Finery.—Chaunts and Music.—Damara language.—Prefixes.

THUS closed an era in the journey; the first great point was reached, the furthest that the Hottentots from Namaqua-land had ever seen—for they had travelled as far as Omanbondè in one great expedition; they went in great numbers and returned in some distress after a few months' absence.

Curiously enough I arrived at Omanbondè the day year that I had left England.

Now that my oxen were becoming a little more manageable, and the men accustomed to travelling, I had hopes of making better progress than I had done, and of soon reaching a far more interesting country than that which I had now nearly crossed. I staid two

days at Omanbondè walking about, putting my map in order, and strolling with my little rifle to shoot guinea-fowls or francolines. There was very little game about, and I had neither patience nor endurance to run on their spoors till I found them. One day as I was sauntering about in this way, I had rather a fright; my rifle was loaded with the merest puff of powder and a round ball, when I caught a sudden glimpse of an animal standing on a mound about 200 yards off. I saw him through the thick boughs of a bush, dropped to the ground directly, and made a careful stalk. I fancied it was a koodoo, and I hoped that I might secure the animal if I could get very near to him. I crawled for about ten minutes amongst the abominable thorns and never showed myself once until about forty or fifty yards from the mound, and then I poked my rifle very gently between the branches of a thorn-tree, and raised myself up slowly on a level with it. To my bewilderment I saw that my game was no koodoo, but a fine black lion with a glorious mane, standing like a statue and looking right at me. His attitude was picturesque, but armed as I was I should much rather have viewed him at a telescopic distance. There was nothing to be done but to put a bold face upon the matter, so I showed myself at once and walked slowly away. I was in an awful fright; I was sure the animal must be hungry, as there was so little game about. He let me walk some fifty yards without stirring in the slightest. He might have been daguerreotyped as he stood. Then he made a bound and trotted away, certainly as much astonished at the interview as myself, for unless he was

a great traveller he could never before have seen a white man or one dressed in clothes.

I am not sure whether or no Omanbondè is the head of that branch of the Omoramba; it begins quite abruptly, but I found that it also ended abruptly, and yet after a short distance the river-bed recommenced; in fact the place is like a trough with sides and ends to it. The Omoramba, eastward of the place, is a succession of troughs, but whether there are others to the west of Omabondè I do not know; there are two, and very likely more, that lie parallel to it and at a short distance to the northward. We arrived on the 5th of April, and on the 8th I was again in my saddle, and set out on my trusty Ceylon to explore a road out of the Omoramba, which seemed even more impracticable, with regard to thorns, than any place I had yet seen. I longed for the free and luxuriant vegetation of the tropics, and to emerge from a country that was scorched with tropical heat, but unrefreshed with truly tropical rains. Timboo, John Allen, two or three Damaras, and the tall guide accompanied me; we rode three or four hours down the Omoramba and then turned to the left, and in four or five hours off-packed by the side of one of the most agreeable of objects—as the harbinger of richer vegetation—a magnificent palm. Three hours the next day took us past a large pool of water, and up to another where there was a werft. Here I felt very much at the mercy of my teasing hosts, who took the liberty of annoying me in every way. I had no meat, and they would neither sell nor give me anything, and I feared we should have to return without food.

We were too tired to watch all night, but slept almost without a fire, lying on our valuables, and with the oxen tied short up to us, as we feared some theft. The next morning, having been satisfied of the goodness of the road, I returned and rode in eleven hours back to Omanbondè, where I arrived before dusk on the 10th. On the 12th the waggons started, and were taken successfully out of the river-bed. An accident to my best rifle—a long two-ounce one—happened in the evening; some giraffes were coming near us, and we ran through the bushes and surrounded them. Andersson, who had the rifle, crawled near to one that Hans had wounded and knocked him over, but the rifle burst or rather cracked with the shot; the breech giving way just beneath the nipple. I suspect that the bullet had become slightly dislodged by the jolting. We encamped of course by the carcase and had a feast. I see now that the best way of feeding savages is not to give them a steady allowance, so many pounds of meat a day, but to starve them the greatest part of their time, aud to gorge them now and then: besides, it is much the most *convenient* way of feeding them. There is no doubt that alternate privation and luxury is congenial to most minds.

The two waggons somehow became separated; mine was as usual ahead, but the other tried a short cut to overtake us, and lost our spoor. We were playing at cross purposes, each trying to find the other for hours; at last we encamped at Okatjokeama, the werft I had before explored.

The Damaras who had been so impudent to me and

my small party were, as usual, highly civil to my large one; had it been much greater they would have given me presents. I saw clearly the truth of what a Portuguese traveller, whom I have quoted before, told me, that it was not safe to beg but better to force the natives to be hospitable, and that if Africa is ever to be thoroughly explored, the only way to do it is in company with a well armed force of men (natives of course).

In a despotic country travelling is easy enough if the good-will of the reigning savage be once obtained, but in a place like Damara-land, where every chief is independent, and has to be persuaded or coerced, the case is very different, and when tribes are changed it will take years to persuade the new tribe that the traveller is not a spy. A large body of men forces its way, and the man who commands it can say to a chief—"I wish to be friends, and here are presents for you to show that I am friendly, and also here are things of exchange to buy what I want. Bring me these or I take them." Many Portuguese traders travel after this way, but stronger measures have to be resorted to in enforcing the discipline of the travelling party, and in compelling civility from the natives, than Englishmen generally would like to adopt. It would be a tedious journey indeed for a man, however well qualified, to attempt to travel as a native would, and to go far into Africa. He would be stopped for months or years at each frontier. We can see this from the case of the missionaries, who have every opportunity of winning respect and regard from the natives they are

amongst, of learning their language and their customs, and who have also every desire of extending their spheres of action; yet a long time elapses between each step that their stations advance, and when they do so it invariably is under the strong influence of some chief that they are even then led on. The traveller who tries to dash at it has many difficulties indeed to encounter.

These scoundrel Damaras wanted to misdirect us, and to send us eastwards instead of northwards, to find out the Ovampo, but the women of the tribe let out the secret to the wives of my Damaras, and the wives of course told it to their husbands, who told it to me, so that their plans failed. The tall guide took great pains to explain to us how innocent he was of all guile, and that he would take us on to the Ovampo and do everything we wanted, and also that it would be very convenient if I paid the calf I had promised him in advance, as he had an opportunity of sending it home now, which he would not have again. I mistrusted my friend—I never did trust a Damara out of my sight—but he teased me and I gave him the calf. Timboo was quite won by his agreeable address, and lent him his horse-rug to sleep upon. The rascal of course sent away the calf, and decamped with the rug the next night. Another savage took us on, and we came to a little bit of a water-hole, then to another, on the succeeding day, where there was a large werft, and we fraternised strongly with the people of it. They confirmed what we had heard, of there being elephants a-head, and pointed out a number of coppice-

covered knolls, all about which the animals were said to be feeding at that very time. We had passed through a broad belt of palms, high, magnificent trees, with fan-shaped leaves and prickly stems, bearing clusters of fruit exactly like that of the North African doum palm, that is to say, a ruddy, dry fruit, with a fibrous kernel that no power we had at command could make any impression upon. I brought some specimens home with me, and they are planted at Kew Gardens. Ivory was very common as an ornament among these Damaras, our present guide sported a long string of ivory beads, which he wore like a halter, it dangled from his neck down his back as far as his heels. The size of these beads, which were carefully made, tapered gradually down, from nearly the size of billiard-balls to that of hazel-nuts. He would not sell his cherished ornament, though he very kindly offered to lend it to me for a day or two, if I wished to wear it.

April 17th.—We arrived at Okambuti, where the werft of the principal chief of these parts, Chapupa, was then lying. We were assured that there were elephants about, who drank regularly at some neighbouring fountains, and we found the spoors of five. One was said to be a savage, single-tusked, old bull, and we made a long but unsuccessful hunt after him; as he walked faster than we could, a whole day's severe labour was on that occasion unrewarded. Some time later, the Damaras went out in a large body to attack him with assegais, for he had come close up to their werft. They surrounded the animal in that

daring way in which African savages are used to attack them; but although several arrows were shot and assegais thrown, no serious harm was done to him. A dog belonging to one of the natives ran in upon the elephant, and while the owner was trying to get the dog back, the elephant caught the man with his trunk and threw him violently to the ground. All his ribs seemed to be broken, and he soon died. There were no guns on the spot at the time of the occurrence. The elephant went away for a few days, but returned again, and came close up to the waggons. He received seven bullets, but the two last were unnecessary, for he was evidently dying after receiving the fifth. The Damaras had a grand feed off him.

I did not wish to waste time in Damara land, and tried to persuade Chapupa to give me a guide to the Ovampo, but after many excuses he flatly refused. Okamabuti is on the Damara frontier, and a Bushman tract of considerable breadth separates the two countries. I had heard every imaginable account of the distance hence to Nangoro's place, but settled in my own mind that it must be somewhere between a five and a twenty days' journey. I therefore made ready to trek on to one of the fountains that the elephants frequented, and to stay there for a little until I could bribe a guide to show me the way on. There were a great many things to be done which required at least a fortnight's rest; the waggon sails, which were torn in shreds, had to be well mended, oxhides had to be dressed and then cut up into reims; saddle-bags were wanting, the men's shoes were worn out; more

ride and pack oxen had to be broken-in, and I had a great deal of country to map up, and several observations to work out.

On the 19th of April we had started for the fountains when an accident occurred that detained me much longer than I had expected. I ought to have premised that the character of the country had entirely changed; instead of small bushes some magnificent timber trees began to appear, forming belts of forest as regular in shape as the designs of an ornamental gardener could have made them, but offering a very considerable impediment to waggon travelling. The oxen were very fresh, and as soon as they were inspanned bolted down a slight descent with the waggon; there was a stump in the way; it looked a rotten affair, such as we had constantly crushed over, but it really was a hard sound piece of wood. The off fore wheel of the large waggon came against it, and crash went the axletree and ever so much more of the wood-work—and there we were!

We did not sit one moment with our hands in our pockets and lament, but brought the other waggon up alongside, and at a proper distance off, and then outspanning worked diligently at making a regular encampment. It would never have done to appear disheartened. We were in a complete jungle, but that we soon cleared sufficiently out of our way; a space was then hedged in round the waggons, half of which was made into a strong ox-kraal, and round this I made my five married couples of savages build their huts at equal distances, that they might act as a watch over it. In this sort of

work the day passed, and I most heartily congratulated myself that the accident had happened where it did, near water and near friendly Damaras, and in almost the only place that we had seen, since Schmelen's Hope, where wood fit for a new axletree could be obtained. I did not dare to trust myself to one of unseasoned wood, as it would not have stood a day's work through

CHAPUPA, A DAMARA CHIEF.

such country as that we were now travelling over, and if the next break-down should be in a spot far from trees, grass, or water, we might find ourselves in very great difficulty. I therefore determined to ride with Andersson on to the Ovampo, and to leave Hans behind in charge of the waggons—which he undertook to repair. Curiously enough, though there were so

many timber trees, yet we searched for hours before we could find two that were fit for our purpose—straight, not too large, and not worm-eaten. These were cut down at once and brought to the camp. The next day found us busily engaged in strengthening the encampment and making it comfortable. The space between the waggons was awned over, the stumps of bushes rooted out of the ground, the fore part of the broken waggon prized up, the wheels &c. taken away, and stones built under it, and some very active days were thus spent.

Chapupa passed most of the time with us; he had been much indebted to Nangoro for assistance in some Damara squabbles and fightings, and was tolerably intelligent and friendly. It seemed that the Ovampo carry on a cattle trade with the Damaras at this point. Two Ovampo caravans, each consisting of from twenty to thirty men on foot, come here with beads, shells, assegais, wood-choppers, and such like things, which they exchange for cattle. They obtain the beads and some of the assegais from the half-caste Portuguese traders who frequent their northern frontier. Some years back the then principal Damara chief received the Ovampo with great civility, and allowed them, as usual, to travel about and barter as they liked; but when they had sold everything and brought a fine drove of cattle together, the chief attacked and robbed them. Chapupa was at that time a second-rate captain, and having been himself robbed he sent to Nangoro for help, which was given; their men joined together, killed the obnoxious chief, and then divided his cattle

between them; and Chapupa now lives in great plenty, and shows the greatest respect towards all the Ovampo. He evidently did not wish to take the responsibility of himself sending me on to Nangoro, as he feared that I might be a spy, and that Nangoro would find fault with him for allowing me an opportunity of learning the road; but he begged that I would wait till the next Ovampo caravan came, when I should have an excellent opportunity of returning with it.

However, on the 25th of April, a man offered himself as guide; I asked him how soon he would be ready: he replied, as was very true, that he had nothing to pack up, only his assegai to take with him, and would start directly. These savages look with great contempt at our wants, and indeed no European could be a match for them in fatigue-work for two or three days; yet, on the other hand, in a long steady journey the savages very quickly knock up, unless they adopt some of our usages. They cannot endure the cold for many nights without a rug to cover them. The mid-day sun gives them a headache, and they require a cap. Their sandals do not keep out the thorns, and they have to make shoes, and they cannot do more than a week's work on pig-nut diet. A savage who makes a dash at work for three or four days gets through it well enough, and a long rest sets him to rights again after his forced exertions; but where there is no such rest, but in its place a steady continuous strain, then he fails unless to a considerable degree he adopts our dress and habits.

April 26th.—We started; John St. Helena, Timboo,

John Williams, Andersson, and myself were all on ride oxen; we had three carrying packs, and a few others loose, with a small drove of sheep: I also took half a dozen Damaras with me. We passed vast numbers of old elephant tracks, but saw no fresh spoors, and halted after proceeding a short distance, but the next day we made a long tedious journey from sunrise to sunset, getting among hills and quite losing our way. We passed a magnificent set of pitfalls, which the bushmen who live about these hills had made; the whole breadth of the valley was staked and bushed across. At intervals the fence was broken, and where broken deep pitfalls were made. The strength and size of the timber that was used gave me a great idea of Bushman industry, for every tree had to be burnt down and carried away from the hills, and yet the scale of the undertaking would have excited astonishment in far more civilised nations. When a herd of animals was seen among the hills the Bushmen drove them through this valley up to the fence; this was too high for them to jump, so that they were obliged to make for the gaps, and there tumbled into the pitfalls. We had seen no people about, but at night when we offpacked, the hill-top in front of us blazed with fires. I presume that more trees were being burnt to make a second set of pitfalls. It was no encouragement to us to see these fires, for three or four bushmen, each with one meal's provision of water, might have walked over from a great distance, and made them, and therefore I had no reason to expect to find near at hand the water that we already were in want of for the oxen.

April 28*th.*—After some hours' travel the guide confessed that he had no idea where we were; so we separated to look for tracks, some climbing one hill and some another. The day was hazy, but Andersson made out something like green grass, five or six miles to the north-west, and the guide found a bushman who directed him in that very course; so we went there, and found not only dry rushes but also a troop of baboons. This was a sure sign of there being water somewhere near, and after looking about a little we came upon wells. We generally found water by observing geese, ducks, baboons, parrots, doves, and little birds (not linnets) in flocks. Guinea fowl are seldom more than three hours from water. Plovers I have seen much further. Fresh converging tracks of men or animals of course indicate it, but old *paths* only mislead; these generally are made when the ground is soft during the rainy season, and lead to some vley which is dry at all other times. In practice, when looking out for water, the first sign that gives hope is a flock of Guinea fowls, then following the lay of the country every distant tree is carefully scanned until a parrot is seen, which, as the bird is fond of perching on the very topmost branches, is, even at great distances, a conspicuous object. A parrot is seldom more than half an hour from water, nor baboons either. Continuing a sharp look-out, and taking a likely course doves are seen flying about, and little birds are found in all the bushes, and they are close upon it.

The well and fountain that we were at was called Otchikango; a bold range of hills bounded it on one

side, and along their foot a considerable sheet of water appeared to have lain in the rainy seasons. The guide recognised the place as the station he had wanted to take us to, and promised that there should now be no further mistakes.

April 29th.—We went on, and after straying for three and a half hours, came again to a nonplus; we had cleared the mountains, and a thick mass of shrubs lay before us. The guide had been following an old elephant, or some other wild beast path, instead of the Ovampo track. I made him climb a pretty stiff hill with me, the cactus and broken stones of which he did not at all like,—but it was of no use to us. A wide forest extended below, without a landmark, so we came down and returned to Otchikango.

The Damaras are bad guides considering that they are savages, and ought to have the instincts of locality strongly developed. On subsequent occasions, in retracing our routes over wide extents of country, it was a common amusement to try each other's recollection of the road by asking what would be the next object or next turn of the path that we should come to. But it is difficult to compare a European's idea of a country with that of these savages, as they look at it in such different ways, and have their attention attracted to such entirely different objects. A Damara never *generalises*; he has no one name for a river, but a different name for nearly every reach of it; thus the Swakop is a Namaqua name; there is no Damara word for it. A Damara who knew the road perfectly from A to B, and again from B to C, would have no idea of

a straight cut from A to C: he has no map of the country in his mind, but an infinity of local details. He recollects every stump or stone, and the more puerile the object the more strongly does he seem to recollect it. Thus, if you say; "I intend to sleep by the side of the great hill where the river-bed runs close under its foot," he would never recognise the place by the description, but if you said, "under the tree, a little way on the other side of the place where the black and white ox lowed when the red ox was in front of him, and Koniati dropped his assegai," &c. &c. every savage in the party would understand the exact locality. The Damaras pick out their way step by step; they never dream of taking a course and keeping to it. All their observations are directed to spoors, sticks and stones, and they perpetually look down on the ground and not round about them.

We had, as usual, been such early risers, that plenty of daylight remained, which we occupied in watching the baboons and climbing about their hills. We had made so zigzag a journey that I mapped out this mountainous region very satisfactorily. Towards evening I saw Andersson walking like a chief, with a long string of Bushmen at his heels; they had come together on the hill-side, and he brought them to the camp. We lavished favours of tobacco and such like things upon them, showed them their faces in a looking glass that I always carried with me, chiefly for that purpose, and finally succeeded in persuading some of the party to guide me to the next place—Otchikoto. One Bushman was to remain all night as a hostage;

the others were to tell his wife, and to bring next day what they required for the journey. I am sure that Bushmen are, generally speaking, hen-pecked. They always consult their wives. The Damaras do not.

Our new friend became uneasy at nightfall when his companions had left him alone, so we watched him alternately throughout the night to see that he did not run away. I do not think the poor fellow slept a wink. I am sure he did not in my watch, for I constantly caught his bright eye gleaming distrustfully round, whilst he pretended to be asleep. In the morning we went on with him, and stopped at a place which was full of grass, about an hour off, till his companions should come to us by a short cut over the hills. After a little time three Blacks were seen running from the direction of Otjikongo. As soon as we could make them out clearer, the Bushmen and Damaras all called out "Ovampo," and so it was.

They were part of the long-expected caravan which had arrived immediately after we had started, and as our spoors and way of camping of course excited the greatest curiosity among them, three men were despatched to bring us back. They were ugly fellows, immensely muscular, and most determined looking; they insisted that we should go back; we laughed at them; they took our Bushman aside, and used all kinds of threats to him, till he hardly dared proceed. In the mean time I was much struck by the cool fearless bearing of the men and their peremptory, yet not uncivil manner; and seeing at once that I had quite a different style of men to deal with from either Bush-

men or Damaras, I acknowledged that it was but reasonable that they should desire to know something of a stranger before they could allow him to pass into their country, and I returned with them to the encampment we had that morning left.

My new acquaintances were entirely a different looking race from the Damaras, but very like the Ghou Damup. They were ugly, bony men, with strongly marked features, and dressed with a very funny scantiness of attire. Their heads were shaved, and one front tooth was chipped out. They carried little light bows three and a half feet long, and a small and well-made assegai in one hand. On their backs were quivers, each holding from ten to twenty well-barbed and poisoned arrows, and they carried a dagger-knife in a neat sheath, which was either fixed to a girdle round the waist, or else to a band that encircled the left arm above the elbow. Their necks were laden with necklaces for sale, and every man carried a long narrow smoothed pole over his shoulder, from either end of which hung a quantity of packages. These were chiefly little baskets holding iron articles of exchange, packets of corn for their own eating, and water bags.

The Ovampo were twenty-four in number, with a tall enterprising-looking young man as captain. I admired greatly the neatness and order of their encampment, and their demeanour was really polished. We soon became good friends, and I killed a young ox for them and for ourselves; they added some corn, which was a most grateful change of diet to us. They paid

us every attention, but refused most decidedly to let any of their party guide us, and insisted that we should return with them to Chapupa's werft, promising at the same time that when they had finished their bartering and returned they would take us with them. The first question that Chikorongo-onkompè (their captain) asked us, was whether we were rain-makers. I regretted that we were not, else we could travel when we liked and where we liked, and be independent of guides. He told us a long and minutely circumstantial lie—at least he afterwards denied every word of it—to the effect that rain-makers were in great request in Ovampo land, and that a tribe of them lived by the great river that bounded it to the north, and that Nangoro sent a woman with several presents to these people. If rain was scarce in any year they killed and eat the woman, and had a fresh one sent to them. He also said that the Bushmen on our road to Nangoro's were very ferocious, and that he and his companions had been fighting with them as they came by, and that now they were more exasperated than ever. These were the only two lies that I have ever heard from an Ovampo. The second was natural enough; as to the first I cannot yet understand why he took such pains to invent and tell it.

Chikorongo-onkompè, or "Chik," as I will for brevity's sake call him, spoke Damara language perfectly, but with an accent, and so did Katondoka and Netjo, the next in command, but the others could barely make themselves intelligible. Their own language is most musical and liquid, and they speak it

in a slow singing manner. It seems nothing but L's, which is curious, as the Damaras do not possess that letter and cannot pronounce it. It is odd enough that Damara children, who say L as all other children do when they try to pronounce R, should as they grow older reverse matters, and forgetting how to pronounce the L, always say R instead of it; thus Mr. Kolbe's name was changed to Korube; my man, whom we nick-named Bill, was called by the Damaras "Biro." They took infinite pains to master my name, which after various transformations settled into Bortonio—the "io" being an affectionately diminutive affix. Andersson's name was too full of consonants for them; they gave it up in despair, and called him Kabandera, (the bird-killer). Many of the Ovampo and Damara words are much alike; thus if you say "bring fire," it is "et omuriro" in Damara, "ella omuliloo" in Ovampo.

The Ovampo way of encamping is very characteristic, for they do not sleep by the side of a large burning log of wood, but instead of that go to great pains in collecting stones about the size of bricks, and make two or three rows of small fires, perhaps five in each row, placing the stones round each of them in a rude circle of two feet diameter, so as to confine the ashes and keep the brands from falling about; then they lie down and go to sleep between the fire-places. They arrange these encampments with great regularity, and the plan of them is certainly a good one in countries where there may be a sufficiency of dry sticks and brush, but no large firewood; for by keeping up the

fires throughout half of the night, which one or two men can easily do, the stones become hot enough to radiate for some hours longer when the fuel has become exhausted and every body has dropped off to sleep; again, from the men sleeping so close in between the hearths, they receive the full benefit of whatever heat is afforded. We, like the Damaras, simply made a roaring fire and slept to the windward of it, for we always had plenty of firewood. I never liked sleeping between two large fires on account of the smoke, and of the great danger of sparks. Hans' bed was more than half burnt under him one night, but some sheep-skins that he was lying on kept him from being scorched, and saved his powder flask. When a heavy log that is half-burnt through breaks and falls with a crash, it scatters burning cinders all about, which the wind will often carry some distance.

The Ovampo had little pipkins to cook in, and eat corn (milice) steeped in hot water; they also eat some salt, which the Damaras never take by any chance. In fact the Damaras could not get it, for there is no salt in their land. There are salt-springs in the lower part of the Swakop, near where we first struck it when we left Scheppmansdorf, and there are large salt-pans, as I afterwards found out, in Ovampo land, and also in the far east, but none whatever in Damara land. In Europe it is generally supposed that salt is a necessary of life, but here we never found it so; I was once on a riding excursion with Andersson and three other men for six weeks, and a pill-box full of salt was all we used. We had then nothing else whatever but

meat and coffee, the latter of which, after a certain degree of "condition" has been obtained, is also a very unnecessary superfluity, and one that I could at any time abandon without regret. The Namaquas occasionally use salt, but they set no store upon it. There is no doubt that people who live on meat and milk would require salt much less than those who live on vegetables, but half the Damaras subsist simply on pig-nuts,—the most worthless and indigestible of food, and requiring to be eaten in excessive quantities to afford enough nourishment to support life. The Hottentots by Walfisch Bay, who live almost entirely on the 'nara gourd, and who have the sea on one side and salt springs in front of them, hardly ever take the trouble to collect salt, which they certainly would do if they felt that craving for it which distresses many Europeans. The last fact that I have to mention with reference to salt, is that the game in the Swakop do not frequent the salt rocks to lick them, as they do in America. I visited these salt rocks (below Oosop) when there had been plenty of game about, and when the spoors of a month old were perfectly distinct, yet no tracks led to the salt which hung down like stalactites from the rock, from one to twenty feet above the ground, at a place where a small brack-spring dribbles over it, and which was perfectly accessible, and in full view.*

The Ovampo were very quiet and sociable; they always seemed to make a point of giving orders in a

* I am informed that certain New Zealand tribes not only eat without salt, but actually look upon it with distaste and aversion.

low tone of voice, and if possible aside. They *can* count, for they explained to me at once the number of Nangoro's wives, 105, using their fingers rapidly to show the number. They also counted my oxen as quickly as I could have done it myself. The next day we returned with them, and on the morrow reached my werft. The Ovampo traders then separated into bands, and went about the country bartering. Chik alone remained behind and received such oxen as were from time to time sent to him. He spent most of his time with me, and told me a great deal about the Ovampo and Nangoro. We found that it would require more than a fortnight's steady travel to get there. My cattle were becoming very thin, and I could ill spare the three weeks that the Ovampo kept me waiting. The grass on this side of the Omoramba was different to that on the other, and the sheep fell off sadly from the change of food, and were hardly worth eating; their tails, once so full of luscious fat, as is the case with all African sheep, were now reduced to cords. There was no game about for us to shoot, and the steady consumption of an ox in every three days told heavily upon my slaughter-cattle. Chapupa would not sell me anything. I think he dared not for fear of offending his old customers—the Ovampo—and the market was not extensive enough for all of us. I therefore saw clearly that my head-quarters had no chance of being removed further to the north unless I met with a sufficiency of game in Ovampo land to support my party, or unless my articles of exchange would buy me an abundance of provisions there. I exhibited all that I had to

Chik, and he told me what to take, and what to leave behind; but showed very little rapture about anything except some red beads and some bars of iron. At my request he arranged a present for Nangoro. An ox was essential, then a handful of red beads, and I added my steel-scabbarded sword, a looking-glass, and a few other things. I took the great crown, but said nothing about it.

I had always plenty of employment for my men; they dressed some hides and made them into good saddle-bags, and also into packing reims, which have to be no less than sixty feet long. It is perfectly impossible to pack oxen with a short reim, for their hide is so loose, and their sides so shaky, that the packs require eight or ten turns of reim round them on the ox's back before they are properly fastened. The tugging that is necessary is enormous. It requires two skilled hands and one native to pack an ox. The native holds him by his nose-reim (or thong); the things are placed on his back, the middle of the reim on the top of them, and the loose ends are pulled under the ox's belly from the opposite side. Then each packer puts his foot against the ox's ribs, and, holding tightly his end of the reim, pulls at it with all his might and main, till the ox's waist is considerably, and even fashionably, compressed; then the reims are crossed over his back, and the loose ends again drawn through under his belly, and another pull is given and so on, till the reim is exhausted; finally the ends are tied.

My savages never could pack; they had not strength

enough to do it. It is true that Damaras do sometimes put things on the back of an old worn-out ox that has not energy enough to kick them off; but they could never pack, as we did, 150 pounds' weight on young oxen that had to be driven through thick cover, and amused themselves with trying to rub their pack off against every trunk or bough of a tree that they could get at.

We never had a sufficiency of leather to make reims of; in fact, we always wanted leather, and I would gladly at any time have exchanged a live ox for a dressed skin. It takes at least two days to dress an ox-hide, and two days' provision is nearly one ox. If game was slaughtered, the Damaras eat so much that they could not work at dressing the hide, which is a most laborious job to undertake, and must be entered upon willingly, or the hide is spoilt. When a hide is dressed, in order to cut it into reims, the projecting edges are first trimmed off, and then with a knife the remaining part is cut spirally round and round the whole way from the circumference to the centre. The reim or band for packing purposes ought to be about an inch thick, and of very regular breadth throughout. A reim, or any other piece of ox-hide that is dressed, is more limp than if it had been tanned; but it feels greasy, and is a nasty thing to handle. Tanned leather is abused by Hottentots and Dutchmen, but I conceive that is simply because it is an innovation upon their ideas. If I travelled again, I should invest largely in it, and only use dressed leather when I had nothing better. Wet ruins the latter, for it makes it

soppy and extensible; drought makes tanned leather rotten, but not if a very little fat be rubbed in occasionally. All my tanned leather things lasted admirably, and far outwore the rest.

I had, whilst waiting for the Ovampo, some fresh oxen broken in, and among them Kahikenè's fine black ox. I did so because news arrived one evening that Kahikenè was killed, and I wished to keep a memento of him, and not to eat his present. It appeared that he went to Omagundè's son's werft immediately after we had parted, and made a bold charge. When the fighting was at its thickest, all Kahikenè's men dropped off, and ran away, leaving him and his son alone. My old servant, Piet, from Mozambique, remained a little time with him, and shot two men with his gun, but then became frightened, and made his escape. An arrow struck Kahikenè; and as he fell to the ground, Omagundè's men speared him through and through with their assegais. His son, a fine intelligent lad, rushed up to him in despair, and was murdered by his side.

As I have brought my narrative to the time when we were about to leave Damara-land behind us; and as we had already lived five months in it, and of course had seen much of the manners and habits of the people, it will be a good opportunity for me to mention them in order, and more fully than I could have done before, without anticipating or breaking the thread of my story.

To commence with their name. It is in their own language "Ovaherero," or the "Merry People;" but

those who are settled towards the interior are always called "Ovampantieru," or the "Deceivers;" for what reason I am totally unable to find out. Damup, which is the Namaqua name for the people generally, has been corrupted by the Oerlams and Dutch traders into "Damara," and by this title they have always been known to the whites. Like the word "Caffre," it is an established name, and also a convenient one; for it supersedes all distinctions of locality and of tribes, which Ovaherero does not; in addition to this, it is very pronounceable, and therefore I prefer adhering to established usage, and calling these savages by it, rather than by words in their own language.

Next, as to their jumble of ideas, which, for want of a better name must be dignified by that of their religion or creed—

In the beginning of things there was a tree (but the tree is somehow double, because there is one at Omaruru, and another near Omutchamatunda), and out of this tree came Damaras, Bushmen, oxen, and zebras. The Damaras lit a fire, which frightened away the Bushmen and the oxen; but the zebras remained. Hence it is that Bushmen and wild beasts live together in all sorts of inaccessible places, while the Damaras and the oxen possess the land. The tree gave birth to everything else that lives; but has not been prolific of late years. It is of no use waiting by the side of the tree in hopes of capturing such oxen and sheep as it might bear.

Again, notwithstanding that everything comes out of the tree, men have in some separate manner a special

origin or "eanda." There are six or seven eandas, and each eanda has some peculiar rites. The tribes do not correspond with the eandas, as men of every descent are to be found in each tribe. The chiefs of tribes have some kind of sacerdotal authority—more so than a military one. They bless the oxen; and their daughters sprinkle the fattest ones with a brush dipped in water every morning as they walk out of the kraal.

DAMARA WOMAN.

They have no expectation of a future state; yet they pray over the graves of their parents for oxen and sheep,—fat ones, and of the right colour. There is hardly a particle of romance, or affection, or poetry, in their character or creed; but they are a greedy, heartless, silly set of savages. Independently of the

tree and the eanda, there is also Omakuru; he can hardly be called a deity, though he gives and withholds rain. He is buried in several different places, at all of which he is occasionally prayed to.

The Damaras have a vast number of small superstitions, but these are all stupid, and often very gross; and there is not much that is characteristic in them. Messengers are greased before they set out on a journey, and greased again when they come back; of one sort of ox only grown men eat; out of one particular calabash of milk only grown men drink, and so on *ad infinitum*. A new-born child is washed—the only time he is ever washed in his life—then dried and greased, and the ceremony is over. Some time during boyhood the lads are circumcised, but at no particular age. Marriage takes place at what appears to be the ages of 15 or 16, but as the Damaras keep no count of years it is scarcely possible to be certain of their ages; my impression was that the Damaras were not so precocious as black people usually are. The teeth are chipped with a flint when the children are young. After death the corpse is placed in a squatting posture, with its chin resting on its knees, and in that position is sewn up in an old ox-hide (the usual thing that they sleep on), and then dropped down into a hole that is dug for it, the face being turned to the north, and covered over; lastly, the spectators jump backwards and forwards over the grave to keep the disease from rising out of it. A sick person meets with no compassion; he is pushed out of his hut by his relations away from the fire into the cold; they

do all they can to expedite his death, and when he appears to be dying, they heap ox-hides over him till he is suffocated. Very few Damaras die a natural death.

The huts are wretched affairs—I have already slightly described them—the women are the builders. They first cut a number of sticks eight or nine feet high, and also strip off quantities of bark from the trees which they shred and use as string; holes are then "crowed" in a circle of eight or ten feet across, in which the sticks are planted upright, their tops are next bent together and pleached and lashed with the bark shreds —this makes the framework; round about it brushwood is woven and tied until the whole assumes a compact surface; a hole for a door three feet by two, is left in one side, and a forked prop is placed in the middle of the hut to support the roof; the whole is then daubed and plastered over, and the work is completed. As the roof becomes dried and cracked with the heat of the fire, and indeed as it generally has a hole in it for a chimney, the Damaras lay old ox-hides on the outside upon its top, weighting them with stones that they may not be blown off; these they draw aside when they want ventilation, but pull them over at night when they wish to make all snug. The furniture of the hut consists of a couple of ox-hides for lying and sitting on, three or four wooden vessels, a clay cooking pot, a bag of pignuts, a leathern box containing a little finery, such as red iron earth to colour themselves with, and a small skin of grease. There may perhaps be an iron knife and a wood chopper; everything else is worn on the persons, or

buried secretly in the ground. When they sleep, the whole population of the hut lie huddled up together like pigs, and in every imaginable position round the small fire. They have nothing to cover themselves with. The children, before they can walk, are carried in a kind of leather shawl at the mother's back; afterwards they are left to shift for themselves, and pick up a living amongst the pignuts as well as they can. They all have dreadfully swelled stomachs, and emaciated figures. It is wonderful how they can grow up into such fine men. The Damaras do not dance much, only on great occasions, when they perform war-dances; neither do they sing together, although they are very fond of chaunting solos in a sing-song air, inventing the words as they go on, and having a chorus to break in now and then. I have seen one guitar amongst them, but it was I think an Ovampo importation; their only musical instrument is their bow. They tie a piece of reim round the bow-string and the handle, and bind them up tight together, then they hold the bow horizontally against their teeth, and strike the tense bow-string with a small stick. A good performer can produce great effect with it; they attend more to the rhythm than the notes, and imitate with its music the gallop or trotting of different animals to perfection. The baboon's clumsy canter is the *chef d'œuvre*, and when well executed makes everybody roar with laughter.

The natural colour of the Damaras is by no means easy to determine, except during the heavy rains which wash off the layers of grease and red pigment with

which they so plentifully besmear themselves. In dry weather the Damara comes out ruddy and glossy, like an old well-polished mahogany table; he is then reeking with oil, his features are plump and smooth, his appearance genial and warm, but a few hours' steady deluge quite alters the man. His skin becomes dead-looking and devoid of all lustre—there is not a tinge of ruddiness in it; it is not even black, but of a pale slate colour, or like old iron railings that want fresh painting, and the Damara, when cleaned, becomes a most seedy-looking object.

Concerning their language I shall say little, as it can only interest philologists, and for their benefit a most copious manuscript grammar and dictionary has already been sent by the Rev. Messrs. Hahn and Rath, to Bonn. Its grammar is much the same as that of the Sichuana and Caffre languages; which are said to be kindred to that of nearly every known negro language in Africa. It is highly flexible, so that when a new word is once obtained they can express immediately and intelligibly every derivative from it. Thus if they learnt the word "bread" they would have no difficulty in forming the word a "baker." The great clumsiness of the language is its want of comparatives and of adjectives. It has one great but not peculiar beauty in the prefix which every substantive possesses. These prefixes have all a special power which it is not easy to define, but which is soon caught up by the learner. To take a simple instance, Omu is the prefix that signifies manhood; Otji, a thing. Now Omundu is simply a man; but by saying Otjimundu, the idea of

an inanimate thing is superadded to the idea of a man, and the word expresses an old crone. The prefix of the substantive which governs the sentence is continued or hinted at through all the declinable words in it, and gives a bond of union to the whole. The vocabulary is pretty extensive; it is wonderfully copious on the subject of cattle; every imaginable kind of colour—as brindled, dappled, piebald—is named. It is not strong in the cardinal virtues; the language possessing no word at all for gratitude; but on looking hastily over my dictionary I find fifteen that express different forms of villainous deceit.

DAMARA WEAPONS, ETC.

CHAPTER VII.

Damara helpmates.—Marriage tie.—Caravan to Ovampo land.—Yearly traffic.—Otchikoto.—Improvised chaunts.—Reach an Ovampo cattle-post.—Archery practice.—The parent tree.—We reach Ondonga.—Corn, beans, and palms.—Fruit trees.—Native beer.—Density of the Population.—Encamp by Nangoro's village.—Cannot obtain Pasturage.—Nangoro pays us a visit.—Ovampo Belles.—We go to a Ball.—Description of Dances.—Charms and counter-charms.—Nangoro's Palace.—The Great River.—Prospects.—The King is Crowned.—His Lawful Successors.—The Queens' Duties.—Ovampo Dentists.—Surgical Practice.

May 22nd.—The Ovampo and ourselves were all in readiness, and we travelled for a couple of hours to a place of general rendezvous. I was very curious to see what our caravans would consist of, as it would give an accurate idea of the amount of trade and communication that goes on northwards from Damara-land. There are four of these caravans yearly,—two to Chapupa's werft, and two that travel between those Ovampo and Damaras that severally live near the sea. Kahikenè had told me of these last; and I have since heard much fuller particulars about them.

We had fifteen ride and pack oxen, eight slaughter; two cows, one calf, thirty sheep, and three goats. Goats are very useful to furnish leather, in case any-

thing should be torn, or bags have to be made; they do not, however, travel quite so well as sheep.

We encamped as usual at night, letting the oxen graze about us, not dreaming of any accident, when a Damara, who was going through the trees, luckily came upon a lion, who was crouching at one of my ride-oxen, almost within springing distance. The lion, of course, decamped, as lions always do when they are discovered at their wicked practices; and we had the satisfaction of hearing him roar hungrily throughout the night. The cry of a lion as he walks about, when he is baulked of sport, is plaintive, and not unmusical; but I never hear them utter it in the menageries in England. It was quite a new sound to me when I first listened to it; and I should never then have guessed it had come from a lion unless I had been told so. Another very peculiar cry is that of the zebra; at a distance it sounds more like the roo-coo-cooing of a dove than anything else. We cut bushes and kraaled in the oxen during the dark; and as I had now only a small drove with me, and plenty of Damaras, I came to a resolution to make a kraal every night for the oxen, and so relieve myself of all anxiety about them. I had found it such a luxury both at Schmelen's Hope and Okamabuti, to have kraals to drive the cattle safe into at nightfal, for, dismissing from our minds all care about them, we could then sleep undisturbed throughout the night. The men of my party were, besides myself and Andersson, John Allen, John St. Helena, and Timboo. I had five picked Damaras with four wives. The women are very useful, for they

carry the men's things, and make their huts, and cook for them, leaving the men unhampered and disengaged, ready to run and drive the oxen, and do anything that might be wanted. Damara women have not much to complain of: they are valuable helpmates; and divorce themselves as often as they like. The consequence is that the marital rule depends not upon violence nor upon interest, but upon affection. A wife costs a Damara nothing, for she "crows" her own pignuts, and she is of positive use, because she builds and plasters his hut, cooks his victuals, and carries his things when he moves from place to place. A Damara seldom beats his wife much; if he does, she decamps. This deference of husband to wife was a great difficulty in the way of discipline; for I often wanted to punish the ladies of my party, and yet I could not make their husbands whip them for me, and of course I was far too gallant to have it done by any other hands. They bored me to death with their everlasting talking; but I must own that there were many good points in their character. They were extremely patient, though not feminine, according to our ideas: they had no strong affections either for spouse or children; in fact, the spouse was changed almost weekly, and I seldom knew, without inquiry, who the *pro tempore* husband of each lady was at any particular time. One great use of women in my party was to find out any plan or secret that the natives I was encamped amongst were desirous of hiding. Experience tells us of two facts: first, that women delight in communicating everybody else's secrets to each other; secondly, that husbands

and wives mutually tell one another all they know. Hence the married women of my party, whenever I staid near a werft, had very soon made out all the secrets of the inhabitants, which they retailed directly to their husbands, and they to me. It was a system of espionage which próved most effectual. A difficulty arising from women's gossipings had occurred at Okamabuti, in which Chik behaved very well. My man Kambanya told his wife, who told other wives, who told their husbands, that the Ovampo intended to rob and murder me as soon as I arrived in their country. The story, by passing through so many hands, had acquired several circumstantial details, quite enough to make it worth inquiring into; so I, not knowing the origin of the tale, had Chik up in judgment before me, and taxed him with what I had heard. He protested his innocence; and then I said that to clear himself he must investigate the report, which he did in a most masterly manner; and traced the whole affair down to the unhappy Kambanya, who had fabricated the story to dissuade me from going, and from taking him to Ovampo-land, so Kambanya was whipped, and my friendship with Chik cemented all the stronger.

May 23*rd*.—We rode on six hours, to the second place of rendezvous, Ootui, and there found all the Ovampo at their encampment, and parties of Damaras under every bush; and as we travelled on next day, I counted in our caravan 86 Damara women, nearly half of whom had yelling babies on their backs, and 10 Damara men. Our party consisted of 14, and the

Ovampo of 24; making about 170 souls in all; 206 head of horned cattle were driven along, independently of my own, and were the result of Ovampo barter; and of these three-fourths were cows or heifers.

The 86 women went on various speculations,—some to get work in Ovampo-land, some to try and get husbands, others merely to sell their ostrich-shell corsets. Chik thought the caravan a little above the average; therefore, as there are altogether four caravans, we may consider 800 oxen as the annual export of Damara-land to the north; in exchange for which at least half of the Damaras are kept supplied with weapons and ornaments, the other half deriving theirs from the Namaquas and the missionaries to the south. The Damaras have no communication whatever with any other country, a broad land dividing them from the natives to the east, and the sandy tract by the sea-shore bounding them to the west.

May 24th.—Arrived at Otchikango, the baboon-fountain, passing a very curious circular hole in the middle of a chalky patch of ground; it was exactly like a bucket, ninety feet across, and thirty feet deep: its name was Orujo: the sides were perpendicular, the bottom flat; and in the middle was a small well, down to which a person could easily scramble. All the ground about is limestone; and wherever there is a bare patch of it, numbers of circular holes, like miniature Orujos, are to be seen: generally they are about the size that would just admit a round lucifer-box; some a few sizes larger; several about a foot across; and in these trees are often growing just as they would

in a flower-pot: those that are open make dangerous pitfalls. The effect is very curious. Mr. Oswell tells me that by Lake 'Ngami he has met with the same things.

May 25th.—For the third time we left Otchikango, and travelled all day, till four P.M., passing over some very rugged ground and dense thorns, such as no waggon could get across: it was a pass over a low chain of hills. The encampments at night were very pretty. There were fires in all directions. Everybody was in the best of spirits. The Ovampo sang their manly chorusses with charming effect. We had no water, but were to reach a wonderful place, Otchikoto, on the morrow, at eleven,—which we did.

May 26th.—Without the least warning we came suddenly upon that remarkable tarn, Otchikoto. It is a deep bucket-shaped hole, exactly like Orujo, but far larger, for it is 400 feet across: deep down below us lay a placid sheet of water, which I plumbed, leaning over from the cliff above, to the enormous depth of 180 feet, the same depth within five or six feet at four different points of its circumference. The water could be reached by a couple of broken foot-paths, to the top of one of which the oxen were driven to drink out of a trough, and a line of men handed up bambooses of water from one to another to fill it. There were small fish in the water; it is curious how they got there. I was told that fish were also to be found in the fountain-head of Otjironjuba, but I did not see them. There were infinite superstitions about Otchikoto, the chief of which was, that no living thing which ever got into it could come out again. How-

ever, John Allen, Andersson, and myself, dispelled that illusion from the savage mind, by stripping and swimming all about it, under the astonished gaze not only of the whole caravan, but also of quantities of Bushmen who lived about the place, and who came to greet the Ovampo, with whom they are on the best of terms.

Although the Ovampo live on the borders of a great river, yet none had ever been seen swimming. It appeared that alligators were so numerous in its waters that the natives feared to venture in. Chik had been extremely friendly up to the present time, but he now began to look with some suspicion upon us; the fact of our having swum about Otchikoto alarmed him—it looked like magic. Again my Damaras were always teasing the others by saying that we were cleverer than the Ovampo—a fact which these would not admit; but now it was proved beyond doubt, and the whole eighty-six females sang songs about us; one matron improvised, and all the others joined in a shrill chorus, like "tirri-tirri-tirri." The self-esteem of the Ovampo had certainly been wounded. Chik at first ridiculed guns. He had seen guns in Benguela, but they must have been worthless affairs, and badly handled, for he laughed at any comparison between them and arrows; however, by degrees he became frightened at seeing what they really could do. There was a duck swimming about the water, not more than sixty yards off, but it looked very much further, as things below one always do, and I shot him very neatly with my little rifle: and again, the next day, Andersson was shooting some birds on the wing for

specimens, and Chik became so frightened that he would not pick them up. We had great fun at Otchikoto; there was a cave there full of bats and owls, which we swam to and explored. The place swarmed with doves, and every now and then a white hawk swooped in amongst them. The Bushman captain fraternised with me, and we interchanged smiles and small presents.

May 27th.—We travelled through the everlasting thorns and stones for nine hours, and offpacked at wells—wretched affairs, that we had to sit up half the night to clean and dig out.

May 29th.—We came on ox spoors. Old Netjo, who is a family man, was beside himself with joy, and kept by my side pointing out all the indications of the neighbouring Ovampo. Passing a reedy, boggy fountain, we came an hour after to Omutchamatunda, which then was thronged with the Ovampo and their cattle. We were received very hospitably, and had a tree assigned us to camp under. The Ovampo gave us butter to grease ourselves with; but as it was clean, and as they also brought corn, I preferred eating it. There was a little game about, and we had some shooting, and also a bathe and a battue of ducks and partridges. No corn was grown here, neither were there any women; it was simply a cattle-post, and far from the corn country of the Ovampo.

May 30th.—We passed the grave of the god, Omakuru; the Damaras all threw stones on the cairn that covered it, singing out Tati-kuru! Tati-kuru! (Father Omakuru). Came to Etosha, a great salt-pan.

It is very remarkable in many ways. The borders are defined and wooded; its surface is flat and effloresced, and the mirage excessive over it; it was about nine miles in breadth, but the mirage prevented my guessing at its length; it certainly exceeded fifteen miles. Chik said it was quite impassable after the rainy season; and it must form a rather pretty lake at that time. We arrived late in the evening at another werft, on the south border of the grand flat, Otchihako-wa-Motenya, which appears to extend as a grassy treeless estuary between wooded banks the whole way hence to near the sea. The Ovampo here could not believe that I was able to express sounds by writing on paper, so I jotted down the names of a number of people, one after the other, and then read them out. I may as well give a few of them, as a guide to the rhythm of the language: Kangŭrà, Entongò, Epingà, Angèrò, Andāhè, Akoosà. I planned a shooting match; there were a great many naturalised Bushmen on the spot, and as all the Ovampo carry bows, I had a large archery meeting. I put up a sheep-skin (which gives a target of about three feet by two), and placed the men eighty paces from it. The prize was tobacco; there were twenty competitors, and each shot six arrows, so that 120 shots were made; but out of these 120 only *one* hit the target fairly, and another brushed it. At very near distances, as from five to ten yards, the men shot perfectly. I have frequently given prizes to Damaras, Bushmen, and Ovampo, to shoot for, but I have only seen wretched archery practice, far worse than that of our societies in

England. I suppose I have been unfortunate; but though I have taken some trouble to see good practice, not only with bows and arrows, but also with rifles, I have never witnessed performances that approached to the accuracy which shooters often profess to attain, although I certainly have seen lucky shots made, and indeed have made them myself. Andersson made a beautiful one at an ostrich in Damara-land. The bird was standing 280 yards from him, in a thick but rather low cover, which concealed its body, while its neck stood high, in bold relief. Andersson stalked up to within that distance, but as the creature was alarmed, and the ground immediately in front was exposed, he could not get nearer. He aimed, of course, high up the neck, intending to hit the body, but the elevation was a little too great, yet the aim proved so perfect, that he shot him dead through the neck.

Katondoka was sent on to tell Nangoro the news of the approach of the caravan, and to carry a message from me to him; and now came our hardest stage of all. It was nineteen hours' actual travel, and told cruelly on the oxen; for they were weak, and had been badly off for grass on the road. We crossed the flat in four hours, keeping close by its easternmost margin; to the west it widened out, and stretched to the far horizon. Four hours from the north border of the flat we passed a magnificent tree. It was the parent of all the Damaras. The caravan stopped awhile, and the savages danced round and round it in great delight. We slept without water. In the morning we had some delays with the oxen, but travelled from early

day-break, passing an empty well at eleven, and another a little later. We pushed through thick thorns the whole time, and had begun to disbelieve in Ondonga, when quite of a sudden the bushes ceased: we emerged out of them, and the charming corn-country of the Ovampo lay yellow and broad as a sea before us. Fine dense timber-trees, and innumerable palms of all sizes, were scattered over it; part was bare for pasturage, part was thickly covered with high corn stubble; palisadings, each of which enclosed a homestead, were scattered everywhere over the country. The general appearance was that of most abundant fertility. It was a land of Goshen to us; and even my phlegmatic waggon-driver burst out into exclamations of delight. Old Netjo's house was the nearest, and he therefore claimed the right of entertaining me the first, and to it we went. He had two or three wives, and a most wonderfully large family, to every member of which he presented us. Then he took Andersson and myself over the establishment, and showed us his neat granaries and thrashing-floors, and his cocks and hens: the pigs, he regretted, had been sent out of the way; and lastly, Mrs. Netjo, No. 1, produced a dish of hot dough and a basin of sour milk, on which we set to work, burning our fingers as we pulled off large bits, which we dipped into the milk and swallowed. Then we went on to Chik's house, who encamped us under a magnificent tree, and took our cattle under his charge. He told me that we were still a long day's journey from Nangoro, and that the whole of our way there would lie through a corn country like this.

The harvest was now over; but the high stubble was still standing, and in it the oxen were allowed to feed. There was at this time hardly any other pasturage for them. The Ovampo have two kinds of corn; one is the Egyptian doura (or exactly like it), a sort of hominy; and the other is a corn that was new to me, but kindred, as I am told, to the Indian "badjera:" its head is cylindrical, and full of small gray seeds, which, though not larger than those of millet, are so numerous that each head contains a vast deal of nutriment. Both kinds of corn grow to much the same height, about eight feet; and in harvesting the reapers bend down the stalks and only cut off the heads. As we journeyed on the next day our surprise at the agricultural opulence of the country was in no way decreased. Chick told us a great deal about the tenure of the farms, and the way they dig them. Each farmer has to pay a certain proportion of the tobacco that he grows to Nangoro (tobacco is the chief circulating medium in Ovampo-land); but the corn can be planted without any drawback upon it. The fields are hoed over before each sowing season, and the corn planted. The manure from the cattle kraal is spread over the ground. They plant beans and peas, but adopt no systematic rotation of crops. The palms that grew here were of the same sort as those that I saw near Omanbondè; but the fruit of these was excellent, exactly like those of the Egyptian doum, while that of the others was bitter. The other trees that I observed were fruit trees: they were sparingly scattered over the country; but nearly all that I saw

were of magnificent size, as large as those in any English park; their foliage was so dense and green that a real shade from the sun could be obtained, which never is the case in Damara-land, as the straggling stunted thorn, with its few shrivelled leaves, offers little more of a screen to its rays than an English tree in winter time. The fruits are of two kinds, one, which I never saw myself as it was not the season for it, was a kind of cherry, according to Timboo's authority, who recognised at once all the produce of his own country (Masapa, by Moviza) here in Ovampo-land. The other is a very acid fruit, not unlike an apple in shape, colour, smell, and size, but with a stone in it. No other tree stands in the corn country of the Ovampo, or at least gives any feature to the landscape.

Ondonga, for that is the name of the land, is most uniform in its appearance; and I should think no stranger could recollect his way for any distance in it. I don't know what we should have done here, if I had brought my waggons. We could never have taken them across the Ovampo fields, trespassing everywhere. The roads that the natives and we travelled were only pathways through the stubble; and we were particularly requested to keep to them. There was hardly any grass whatever, it was perfectly eaten up; and the Ovampo oxen had been sent away to distant cattle-posts on every side to get food. They were now being driven back in small herds to eat off the stubble upon the farms of their owners. By each homestead were five or six cows and a quantity of goats, very small, but yielding a great deal of milk. To give water even to

these was a great difficulty, for the wells have to be dug twenty or thirty feet deep through the sandy soil before water is reached; and then it oozes out so slowly that only a very limited supply can be obtained. There had been great trouble in getting even my small drove of cattle watered; but Chik said that there were some vleys still left, which were Nangoro's property; but to which he would probably allow my oxen to be driven. The Ovampo make a great fuss about water; if I wanted any to drink I had to buy it with beads. I was greatly pleased with the mutual goodwill and cordiality that evidently existed among the Ovampo; they were all plump and well-fed; even the blind old people, who are such wretched objects in Damara-land, were here well tended and fat. They looked shy at me; but Chik had been impressing upon me during the whole of our journey that his countrymen would all keep away until Nangoro had seen and approved of me, then they would come from all sides, and be as civil as possible. Chik introduced me to some of his most particular friends, who were very hospitable indeed, stopping us on the road, and giving us beer and biscuits, and such-like luxuries. The beer is not to be despised, although it is very thin and sweet; it is made from crushed corn and water, and takes two or three days before it is quite ready. I should think that a person must drink immense quantities before he could become intoxicated with it, but two or three tumblers full make one sleepy.

We travelled short stages, sleeping one night at the house of one of Chik's friends who kraaled our oxen in. I was much afraid of their straying in the night,

as if they did so they might cause all sorts of damage. I felt ill at ease in Ovampo land, because I was no longer my own master. Everybody was perfectly civil, but I could not go as I liked, nor where I liked; in fact I felt as a savage would feel in England. My red coat was the delight of all the little boys and girls, plump merry little things, who ran after me shouting and singing as happy as could be. The Ovampo took much interest in seeing the oxen packed and ridden; they had never seen them used in that way before, and carefully examined the saddle-bags, and the way they were put on.

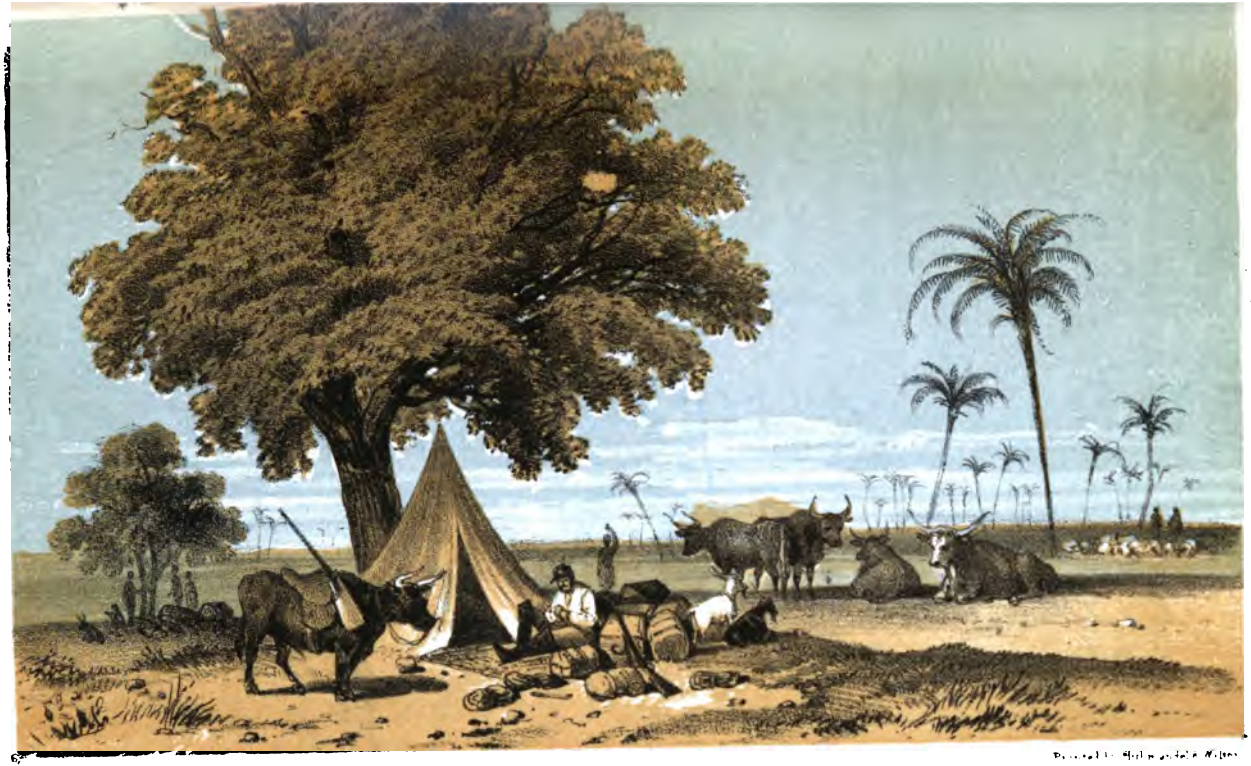
To gain some idea of the amount of the Ovampo population I counted the number of homesteads that I passed, and found that I saw, on an average, thirty in each hour's ride, about three miles. From the undulating nature of the country, and from the number of palms, I considered that I could only see a mile and a half on either side of me, and therefore these thirty farms would take up a square of three miles in the side, or nine square miles; that is, in round numbers, three farms would occupy a square mile; allowing from thirty to forty souls in each farm, it gives a population of a hundred persons to a square mile. There is no town whatever in Ondonga, for the population is entirely rural.

Travelling on we passed a few Damaras who had lately arrived from Omaruru to make amends to Nangoro for some thefts which the natives on that side of the country had been committing against the Ovampo. A little further we met four Ovapangari who had come south from the great river; they were

frightened and suspicious, and Chik would not interpret for me to them.

At last a particularly fine clump of trees came in sight, and there Chik said we were ordered to stay, Nangoro's palisading being only a quarter of a mile further. Here we offpacked, and made a kind of encampment. I pitched my tent, and we made as good a screen as we were able with the saddle-bags, and a few palm branches, but we had hardly any firewood, grass, or water. After a great deal of trouble I made Chik obtain for us the use of some wells close by, but we had to wait half the day till they were disengaged. Then I could find no place to send my oxen to feed. No kind offer was made of a stubble field, and Chik would not bestir himself much. He was always saying, "You must wait; Nangoro will come down and see you to-morrow, and then he will arrange everything;" but in the meantime my oxen were starving. The Ovampo kept away from us, and Chik was almost the only person that we were allowed to communicate with. We all felt uncomfortable, I never for a moment expected any attack from the Ovampo, but I had considerable misgivings that they purposely intended to keep my oxen in low condition that I might be less independent.

Ondonga is a very difficult place to get away from. Indeed if anything had occurred to make it advisable for me to force a quick retreat I hardly know how I should have done it. It would have been very questionable if we could have found our way back by Netjo's house; for, as I mentioned before, the country



CAMP IN OVAMPO LAND.

John Murray Albemarle Street 1858

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is remarkably uniform, intersected with paths, and quite destitute of natural features to guide us. It is also slightly undulating, enough so to limit the view to a mile or two ahead. There was vley water, if we did not miss it, near to Netjo's; and thence there remained a journey of twenty-one hours, two hours in Ondonga, and nineteen in the thorns and flats, without water; and as part of this lay over a bleak country the stage was too severe a one for any weak ox to endure. I found that some Ovampos had been tampering with my Damara cattle-watchers; one, a man whom I had taken from Chapupa's werft, became impudent, and instead of driving my cattle to grass, kept them on a bare place for half the day; so I took active measures upon his back and shoulders, to an extent that astonished the Ovampo and reformed the man.

June 6th.—Nangoro did not come, but sent us a little corn as a present, and requested us to fire off our guns, as he wished to hear what kind of noise they made. We had plenty of ammunition, and therefore amused ourselves with some rifle practice, which several Ovampo watched from a short distance with great interest.

June 7th.—The oxen looked dreadfully thin. I began to fear that they would die, and then we should have to abandon our luggage and get back on foot—an exertion which I had little fancy for. However about midday Chik came in great excitement to tell me that Nangoro was on his way to me, so I smartened things and made ready for him. There was a body of men walking towards us, and in the middle of them an

amazingly fat old fellow laboured along; he was very short of breath, and had hardly anything on his person. This was the king himself. He waddled up looking very severe, and stood in the middle of his men staring at us, and leaning on a thin stick very neatly shaped, that he seemed to carry about as a sceptre. I hardly knew what to do or what to say, for he took no notice of an elegant bow that I made to him, so I sat down and continued writing my journal till the royal mind was satisfied. After five or six minutes Nangoro walked up, gave a grunt of approbation, and poked his sceptre into my ribs in a friendly sort of manner, and then sat down. He could, I believe, understand Damara well enough, but he persisted in making Chik interpret for me into Ovampo. Nangoro had quite a miniature court about him; three particularly insinuating and well-dressed Ovampo were his attendants in waiting; they were always at his elbow and laughed immoderately whenever he said anything funny, and looked grave and respectful whenever he uttered anything wise, all in the easiest and most natural manner. I gave Nangoro the things that I had brought as a present for him, regretting excessively that I could spare him nothing better. In fact all my gilt finery was but little cared for by these people. It would look as *outré* for an Ovampo to wear any peculiar ornament as it would for an Englishman to do so. The sway of fashion is quite as strong among the negroes as among the whites; and my position was that of a traveller in Europe, who had nothing to pay his hotel bill with but a box full of

cowries and Damara sandals. I would have given anything for ten pounds' worth of the right sort of beads; half of that value would have made a really good present to Nangoro, and franked me into the good graces of all his people. As it was he was rather sulky, for it is considered a kind of insult to an African chief to visit him, and make use of his country without commencing acquaintance by sending a tribute. He insisted upon my giving him a cow which I, or rather John Allen, had with me, besides the ox I had presented him with; and as there was no help for it, the cow went. We then had a short conversation; he looked at our guns and made us shoot with them, chatted a little, and then left us, saying that we were free to buy and sell with his people as much as we liked. Immediately crowds of the Ovampo, who had been gathering during the interview, poured down upon us, laughing and talking, but taking the greatest care not to touch our things, or to annoy us in any way. They were a merry set, and all of them dressed, or rather ornamented, very tidily. They wore a great quantity of beads and rings, but scarcely anything else except a kind of cartouche box, in which they kept a tuft of hair for painting and powdering themselves. The ladies were buxom lasses, having all the appearance of being good drudges. Their hair was worn short in front, but spread out behind into a broad fan. They were decidedly nice-looking; their faces were open and merry, but they had rather coarse features, and shone all over with butter and red pigment. They seemed to be of amazingly affectionate

dispositions, for they always stood in groups with their arms round each other's necks like Canova's graces. They hummed sentimental airs all day long, swaying themselves about to the tune, and completely ruined the peace of mind of my too susceptible attendants. I began to buy corn and beans from them; the women brought small baskets full, often only a handful each, and were paid in beads. I had brought a bar of iron, half an inch thick, and four feet long, that procured me 100 pounds of corn at once. Timboo was the most successful bargainer; he sat in the middle among the beads, and twenty or thirty corn-selling damsels crowded about him. He was in his glory, chaffing and chattering in a most original patois all the day long, for he had picked up a few Ovampo words, and many of the Ovampo knew a little of Damara.

Every night Nangoro gives a ball, to which the *élite* of Ovampo-land have a free *entrée*. He kindly sent me an invitation by Tippoo, that one of his three courtiers under whose protection we had been especially placed. As soon as night sets in, the guests throng together from all sides, and as the country is full of palms, one member of each party generally picks up a dried, broken-off branch, and lights it as a torch. It gives a brilliant flame, and the effect of the many lights on every side is particularly pretty. I went, about eight o'clock, down the sanded walk, between quickset hedgerows, that leads to Nangoro's palisading. When we had entered it, we turned to the right, into the dancing-court, which was

already filled with people who talked and flirted just as though they were in an English ball-room.

There was a man with a feeble guitar, or banjo, in one corner, and a powerful performer on the tom-tom in front of him. The first dance was remarkable as a display of dexterity, though I hardly think of elegance; it was undertaken by twelve or fourteen gentlemen, all the others looking on. The dancers were ranked in double files, and *dos-à-dos*; they then "*passéed*" from side to side with a tripping operatic step, but a wary and cautious eye. Every now and then one of the performers spun suddenly round, and gave a most terrific kick right at the seat of honour of the gentleman whom he then found in front of him. This was the dance; there was a great deal of dexterity shown both in delivering and avoiding the kick which, when successfully planted, hit with the force of a donkey's hoof. I observed that the three courtiers danced very well and very successfully, indeed I would not have found myself *dos-à-dos* with Tippoo for any consideration. The ladies applauded the dance most vociferously. After this came a promenade; we were all jammed together into a compact mass, and then stepped round and round the court to the sound of the tom-tom, tapping the ground with our feet in regular time. Dance number three was for the Bushmen, a large kraal of whom lay close by Nangoro's palisading; they are his body-guard. This dance was entirely mimicry, either of animal steps or anything else they liked, and then a grand promenade closed the evening. I saw only thirty or forty of

Nangoro's wives there. I suppose that the others, being old, did not dance. They wear a copper armlet as a sign of distinction.

I had a difficulty with Nangoro, from not having complied with one of the principal Ovampo customs, on first entering the country. I did not like it, though if I had had a proper idea of its importance, I should, I suppose, have submitted with the best grace I could. The Ovampo are, as all blacks and most whites, very superstitious; a particular fear seems to possess them of a stranger charming away the life of a person he may happen to eat with. Why dinner time should be the season when the charm has most power I do not know; but such is considered to be the case. Accordingly, counter-charms are used; sometimes one is in fashion, sometimes another; now, Nangoro, when a young man, being a person of considerable imagination, framed a counter-charm for his own particular use, and this being of course taken up by the court, is at present the fashion of the whole of Ovampo-land, and it was to this counter-charm that I personally objected. The stranger sits down, closes his eyes, and raises his face to heaven; then the Ovampo initiator takes some water into his mouth, gargles it well, and, standing over his victim, delivers it full in his face. This ceremony having once been performed, all goes on smoothly, though I am inclined to think that, like vaccination, it requires to be repeated at intervals, as its effect dies away. Old Netjo yielded to my objections the day I dined in his house, as Chik had done when I first met him, and compromised the matter by rubbing butter between

my eyes instead. But Nangoro's mind was not so easily satisfied; he was harassed with suspicions; and though he invited me to drink beer at his palace, yet he contrived to be out of the way when the beer was brought in, and made the three courtiers sit down with me instead.

The plan of all the Ovampo houses is intricate, but Nangoro's was a perfect labyrinth, and I could never find my way about it. Conceive walls of palisading eight or nine feet high, the poles of which are squared, smoothed, and driven in so close together, that it is only here and there that an arrow could be shot out between them. With these an irregularly circular place of about one hundred yards across is walled, one entrance being left, and to that entrance a broad double pathway leads, which is marked and divided by slight hedges. Within the outer circle other walls of palisading are placed in various ways; on one side a passage leads to the cattle kraal, in another place there is one leading to the dancing-court; passages lead to Nangoro's rooms, to the granaries, to the threshing floors, to the women's apartments, and to those of the attendants and of the three courtiers. I tried to sketch out the plan several times, but my head would never take it in.

Nangoro came to my encampment one morning for a chat, and to see the guns fired; we talked about the countries to the north, and of the great river, which was four long or five easy days' journey ahead, but towards visiting which I could obtain no offer of assistance from him. He told me that the traders (Portuguese)

who went there never crossed it, but that his people went to them and were ferried across by the Ovapangari. I had become quite familiar with this river by hearsay, as nearly every Ovampo had been there, and many Damaras also. There were some runaway slaves from Benguela who knew all the places marked in the usual maps, as Caconda, Bihe, Quinbumba, and so forth, and spoke of the houses of many stories with great wonder. The river runs from east to west, and with a very rapid current, so much so that boats never went up it, but only ferried from side to side; the breadth of the river was so great, that though a man's shouting could be heard perfectly across it, yet his words could not. They said it was very deep, and full of alligators. It ran down to near the sea, and there it ended in a large pool, percolating, of course, like very many other large African rivers, through the sands. In this pool were great numbers of hippopotami, and the sand between it and the sea was so soft and treacherous that people could not walk over it. The names of the people who lived along it I have put down on the map at the places they were described to inhabit. The Damaras call them all "Ovampo." The traders who go down to this river to barter have occasionally horses (their spoor, neigh, and gallop, all being mimicked to me). They bring brandy, beads, and assegais, to exchange for ivory and cattle. These traders must be very nearly black, because not only the colour of our skin but the straightness of our hair was a constant marvel to the Ovampo. They wondered if we were white all over,

and I victimised John Allen, who had to strip very frequently to satisfy the inquisitiveness of our hosts. Nangoro positively refused to believe in the existence of any country which was inhabited by whites alone. He seemed to consider them as rare migratory animals of unaccountable manners but considerable intelligence, who were found here and there, but who existed in no place as lords of the land.

In all the inquiries that I made I had much trouble in worming out my information, for Nangoro was not at all communicative; and Chik, from some cause or other, became daily more distant and reserved. The subject of the oxen was always a sore one. Nangoro would not give me the use of his stubble-fields, or the right of watering my oxen at the wells before his own had drunk; the consequence was that they remained hanging about till noon, and then were driven off two or three miles to a piece of ground as barren as Greenwich Park in summer-time. They came home every evening thinner than they were the day before, and were now in a wretched state: the poor things were becoming very weak indeed, and we were perpetually talking over the chances of their breaking down on the return journey. It was exactly eighty hours actual travelling from Okamabuti, or allowing two miles and three quarters an hour, two hundred and twenty miles; of this, nearly sixty miles, partly choked with thorns, partly as bleak as Salisbury Plain, had to be travelled without water. This, of course, would be nothing to animals in good condition, and in a European climate; but it was a very different

matter to me in Africa. I had been given to understand from the first that I must neither go back nor go on without Nangoro's express permission; so that we were always under some anxiety. Of course I did all I could to please him; but still, either from want of consideration on his part or intentionally, things did not go on smoothly. Once when he was in a good humour I produced my theatrical crown, which I had not shown him before, and gave him a long discourse upon it. I told him that the great captains of our country usually wore a head-dress of that description, and that I therefore begged he would do me the favour of wearing it, as a memento of my visit to him. It had a contrivance behind for altering its size, and I stretched it to its full extent, for Nangoro's head was like a bullock's, and then put it on him with great solemnity, patting it down to make it sit tight. I must say that he looked every inch a king. The three courtiers were in ecstasy, and Nangoro himself gave every sign of self-satisfaction when I held up a looking-glass before him to show the effect; and afterwards carefully sketched him. Nangoro, in the first instance, had views with reference to me to which I confess I showed but little inclination; it is really a great drawback to African explorings that a traveller cannot become on friendly terms with a chief without being requested and teased to receive a spare wife or a daughter in marriage, and umbrage taken if he does not consent. It is, I know, very ungallant to betray tender secrets, and I would not do so on any account, if the charming Chipanga was ever likely to read this

NANGORO, KING OF THE OVAMPO.

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book; but I cannot help hinting at the subject, as it not only illustrates a phase of African life, but also indicates a direction in which any adventurous fortune-hunter may successfully push his addresses. For the benefit of those gentlemen I must explain how matters stand. Nangoro is king by virtue of his deceased first wife; by her he has no children. Chipanganjarà married that lady's sister, who also is dead, leaving one daughter as heiress to the kingdom; and this daughter is Chipanga. She, greasy negress as she was, never forgave me the "spretæ injuria formæ."

I observed that some wild ducks and geese flew over our encampment every morning and evening, and begged Tippoo that I might be allowed to go to the water where they drank. We walked a couple of hours due east, and came to a long succession of vleys, where droves of Nangoro's cattle were watered. There was no grass near, or else I should have insisted on encamping there. Beyond the vleys the thorns began again. Elephants come down at times in great numbers, and do much mischief to the corn. I fancy that game is very abundant in the neighbourhood of the great river, although there must be a great deal of cultivated ground adjacent to it. The course of the river is very long, and its stream is undoubtedly swift, because although a considerable slope might be allowed for from Nangoro's werft northwards to its bed, still the height of the bed at that place above the sea can hardly be less than 3000 feet. To the westwards of north the river is formed by the confluence of three others; and in that country the Ovabundja live;

it is marshy and flooded, and the people live in houses built on poles.

It is very remarkable that between Chapupa's werft (where the waggons were left) and Nangoro's, a distance of 220 miles, we had not crossed a single river-bed. There was the mark of one little rivulet about four feet wide, near Otchikoto, and that was literally all. I could obtain no answer from Nangoro as to whether or not I might proceed. Chik, who was our only medium of communication, put off everything with a "to-morrow." We were so teased with his procrastination, that we christened him "Mahuka," which was his favourite word. I went to Nangoro's to see his wives at work, threshing corn. They make meal by pounding the grain in a stone mortar; everything was scrupulously clean and tidy. The granaries are in shape and manufacture exactly like our common bee-hives, though considerably larger, about four feet in diameter; these are placed with the point downwards, each in a rough frame-work on three legs, which raises it a foot from off the ground; into the bee-hive the grain is put, and the whole is thatched and plastered over: in Nangoro's granary rows and rows of these were standing.

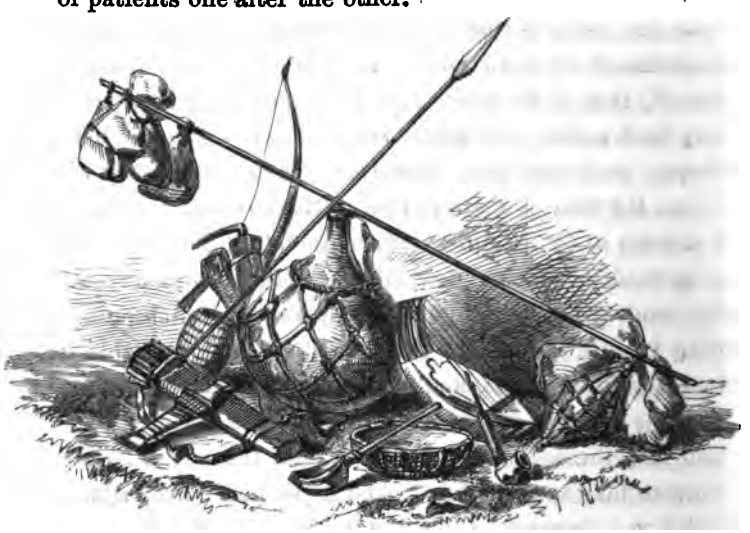
I have no fancy for their houses; they are so absurdly small. They are circular, five and a half feet across, and three feet high, with a conical thatched roof above all; the door is two feet high, and one and a half broad. Nangoro sleeps in the open air under a shed, as he is too fat to creep into one of these houses. Each hut is occupied by an entire family: a husband,

a wife, and a few small children; and when the door is closed by the mat, and a cozy fire made in the middle of the hut, they must find the atmosphere particularly genial and sweet. Their utensils are remarkably neat; they have wooden cups, beer ladles, spoons, and so forth. I regretted much that I had not enough things of exchange to buy some of these which took my fancy. Their dagger-knives were creditably made, and very pretty. The knife was set into a wooden handle, and fitted into a wooden sheath; but both handle and sheath were in part covered with copper plating, and in part wound round with copper wire beaten square. There is plenty of copper in this country. The Bushmen brought us quantities of ore at Otchikoto.

Tippoo took me to see a blacksmith; but his bellows were scarcely larger than an accordian, and were worked in a similar manner. He was not a successful artificer. I had occasion to make inquiries for a professional gentleman, a dentist, as one of my teeth had ached so horribly that I could hardly endure it. He was employed at a distance; but I subsequently witnessed, though I did not myself undergo the exercise of his skill. He brought a piece of the back sinew of a sheep, which forms a kind of catgut, and tied this round the unhappy tooth; the spare end of the catgut was wound round a stout piece of stick, and this he rolled up tight to the tooth, and then prised with all his force against the jaw till something gave way. I saw the wretched patient sitting for the rest of the day with his head between his knees, and his hands against his temples.

The practice of surgery is rather rude among the Ovampo. Timboo had run a thorn very deeply into his hand; it did not remain in, but the prick caused a painful abscess, which pointed and partly broke. He applied to the Ovampo doctor, whose measures were simple: he squatted down, resting Timboo's hand upon his knee, and then grasped a tough stick with both hands, with which he energetically kneaded down the swelling. Timboo endured the operation without a cry; but a black can bear anything.

There are no diseases in these parts except slight fever, frequent ophthalmia, and stomach complaints. I kept a bottle full of eye-water for the sufferers from ophthalmia, and stuck a feather into the bottom of its cork, with which I could paint the eyes of a whole row of patients one after the other.



OVAMPO WEAPONS, UTENSILS, ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.

We are ordered to return.—Hesitation.—The Slave dealings here.—Future of Ovampo-land.—A Field for Missionaries.—Best way of getting there.—Slavery and Servitude.—Giving men away.—Arrange my packs.—Start Homeward.—Leave Ondonga.—The Oxen suffer severely.—Reach Okamabuti.—The Waggons are safe.—Start for Omaramba.—Okavarè.—Elephants visit us.—Ice every night.—Pass Omagundè,—Reach Barmen.

On one occasion Nangoro told me that he would send Chik back with me to my country. I promised to take him as far as that of the Hottentots, where he could see some of my countrymen; but that my country was so far off, that if he went to it, he would never find his way back again; besides, it was cold, and he would die there; so it was agreed that Chik should go back with me to Barmen. I was very glad of this arrangement, as I wanted to obtain fuller information from him than I possessed. I wished to make a small vocabulary of the language of the Ovampo, and learn something more than I could observe of their manners and customs; but here in Ovampo-land Chik would scarcely answer a single question. He constantly replied, "You must not ask these things; Nangoro will think that you want to take away his life." And he became quite sulky if he was pressed. Indeed, I have no conception to

this day whether or no the Ovampo have any religion, for Chik was frightened and angry if the subject of death was alluded to.

My articles of exchange were now reduced to a few handfuls of beads; and I could not stay longer in the country. A man can no more travel without things of exchange here than he can without money in England. I therefore insisted upon being allowed to leave Ondonga, where my cattle were dying by inches, and where I was eating up my food, and could afford to stay no longer; and I begged hard for a guide to take me on to the river, or to some place where I should find pasturage and game.

June 13*th*.—Nangoro sent me word "that day I might buy and sell; that the next day I must come and take leave of him; and the day after that I must go back to Damara-land."

Now came the question what was to be done. The river was four long days ahead. It was a goal to reach, and in itself probably well worth visiting. Its commercial importance might be great, as it appears to offer a high road into the very centre of Africa, through countries which, if as healthy as Ovampo or Damara-land, leave nothing to be desired on that score. It was precisely the most interesting point of my whole journey. Ought then a visit to it to be abandoned because Nangoro would not let us go? Or ought we to push on for it at all hazards? On the other hand, the river was well known to, and frequented by traders from Benguela; there would therefore be no difficulty in fully exploring it from that side; and probably infinitely

more could be learnt by inquiries properly made at Mossamedes than anything that I could report from having seen it with my own eyes during so cursory a visit as I proposed. Now, as to the risk I should run by temporising with Nangoro until I had obtained permission to go there. My oxen would entirely knock up, and probably die; and then what could I do? Even if I walked back to the waggons, leaving things of the greatest value to me in Ovampo-land, the want of ride-oxen would be felt most seriously throughout the return journey. They were everything to me. It was on them that I explored the roads, followed tracks, and made the most successful expeditions. If Omagundè, through whose pasture grounds I must return, was to attack us, as I thought he most probably would, it must be by the ride-oxen alone that we should have a chance of escaping. I could not spare them nor risk losing them. It would be impossible to replace them before many months, as it is not one ox out of forty that will make a ride-ox, for only those are fit to break in that show far less gregariousness of disposition than oxen ordinarily do. The beasts that walk first, and lead the herd, are the only oxen that can be ridden with any comfort or success; the others jib and crowd together, and fight with their horns, when you try to urge them on, and the whole caravan comes to a stand-still. It takes half a year to break in an ox to anything like travelling purposes; he has not only to learn to be quiet, but also to bear a weight on his shoulders. Now, with great trouble I had collected together fifteen efficient ride and pack oxen: they were

the stay of my party in cases of difficulty or danger, and I would not for any but the weightiest considerations run the risk of losing them. With no better supply of water and pasturage than they were now allowed, I felt sure that though they might reach the river, and even return to Nangoro's, yet that they would never see Damara-land again. I also feared that the Portuguese traders might play me some tricks, as these half-castes are by no means scrupulous, even less so than traders are elsewhere; and I could not help thinking of the way in which our own countrymen had behaved to the late Mr. Ruxton, when he landed at Walfisch Bay, with a view to explore the interior. I confess that greatly annoyed as I was at being unable to visit the river, I could not help feeling that Nangoro's refusal to let me proceed was all for the best, and I accommodated myself to his orders, and put myself in readiness to start on my return.

I made many inquiries as to whether there were any slave-dealings between the Ovampo and the Portuguese; but I was always answered in the negative. I afterwards heard at St. Helena that slaves were not exported from the south of Benguela, because they never thrived when taken away, but became home-sick and died. This is exactly what I should conceive of the Ovampo; they evidently have strong local and personal attachments; they are also very national, and proud of their country.

I should feel but little compassion if I saw all the Damaras under the hand of a slave-owner, for they could hardly become more wretched than they now are,

and might be made much less mischievous; but it would be a crying shame to enslave the Ovampo. To me, as a stranger, they did not behave with full cordiality; and it was natural enough that they should not; but among themselves the case was quite different. They are a kind-hearted, cheerful people, and very domestic. I saw no pauperism in the country; everybody seemed well to do; and the few very old people that I saw were treated with particular respect and care. If Africa is to be civilised, I have no doubt that Ovampo-land will be an important point in the civilisation of its southern parts. It is extremely healthy, and most favourably situated for extending its influence. From the sea-coast it must be accessible; and inquiries really should be made at Mossamedes about the river which bounds it. A ship cruising along the sea-shore there can see nothing at all, for the coast is a low sandy desert, which extends quite out of ken of people afloat: it is behind this strip of desert that the habitable country begins, and probably *through* the sand of it that the river percolates. It is very much to be wished that some explorer would make an attempt from Little Fish Bay, or thereabouts. It would be a far easier undertaking than that which I have gone through, because the starting-point is an inhabited place, where every necessary can be bought with money. Full information could be obtained there on all the articles of exchange, and horses could be procured. Black men, who speak Portuguese, can readily, I am assured, be found; and there is so large an export of skins and ivory (according

to Portuguese authorities) from Benguela, that there must be excellent shooting somewhere in the country. I will guarantee the healthiness of the lands to the south of the river; and the Portuguese declare the same of those to the north.* I also earnestly recommend this land to the notice of all who are interested in missionary enterprise. The Ovampo have infinitely more claims on a white man's sympathy than savages like the Damaras, for they have a high notion of morality in many points, and seem to be a very inquiring race. It would be an easy country to secure a footing in, as the king's good-will has alone to be gained, and not that of numbers of independent captains, who never settle by the missionaries, but come suddenly with

* Translation from Josè Joaquim Lopez de Lima's work on the Portuguese Settlements in Western Africa. 1846. (Page 196.)

"To the southward of the river Longa is the fertile province of Benguela, where, instead of sandy plains, rich meadows watered by mountain-streams display themselves before the eye, covered with cattle and sheep, the principal riches of its pastoral inhabitants. The soil produces all the grains and fruits of Africa, America, and Europe, while from amid these favoured plains arise the magnificent mountains of the Naunos, whose lofty heads are lost in the clouds. From these mountains rush down fertilising streams; in their bowels are found iron, copper, sulphur, and other valuable productions, and the forests afford protection to herds of elephants, to rhinoceroses, stags, and a thousand different descriptions of wild animals, whose spoils constitute a principal portion of the gains of the merchants of Benguela and Mosammedes. This fertility extends over the cultivated plains of Bihe, Quilengues, Bumbo, Huila, Enjau, Caconda, Galengue, and Sambos, being bounded by the country of the Mocoands, which separates the Portuguese possessions from the illimitable deserts of sand which form the *ne plus ultra* of our dominion."

N.B. I protest not only against the "illimitable deserts of sand," but also against the southern portion of the map which accompanies the book, in which a magnificent but apocryphal river is made to meander through them, and over the very ground which I have crossed and recrossed.—F. G.

their cattle, eat off all the grass near, and then move on to a fresh pasturage.

I should have said that I use the word Ovampo in the Damara sense, in which it includes all the corn-growing tribes to their north. These seem to be of precisely the same race, manners, and customs; and they speak one language. I have seen men from several of them; and whenever I asked the Ovampo, they said that all their neighbours were just like themselves.

On my voyage back to England, as I was very anxious to determine the question of how the Ovampo river was connected with the sea, and whether it afforded a good road up the country, I waited a month at St. Helena for the chance of a vessel to take me to Little Fish Bay; owing, however, to the suppression of the slave-trade, none of our cruisers called there as they used frequently to do, neither was it expected that they would do so: I therefore abandoned the attempt.

But a traveller who, starting from the north, desired to make the expedition, should go in the first instance to Rio, and thence plenty of opportunities would offer of crossing over to Africa.

Though no slaves are exported from the countries in which I travelled, yet there is a kind of slavery in the countries themselves. It is not easy to draw a line between slavery and servitude; but I should say that the relation of the master to the man was, at least in Damara and Hottentot land, that of owner rather than employer.

I cannot speak with certainty of the exact standing in which the Damaras and the Bushmen severally live among the Ovampo. The first are employed principally as cattle-watchers; the second, who are even more ornamented than the Ovampo themselves, are a kind of standing army; but I have great reason to doubt whether either the one or the other class is independent. The Ovampo, as I have mentioned, looked down with much contempt on the Damaras; and there is not a single instance, so far as I could learn, of an Ovampo-woman marrying a Damara, and settling in Damara-land; but the reverse is a very common case. The Bushmen appear to be naturalised among the negro-tribes, and free in the border-lands between them to a distance very far north of Ondonga. I cannot say how far; but I certainly think to the latitude of Caconda. I believe them to be a very widely spread race. Of the Ghou Damup I lost all trace in Ovampo-land. The Namaqua Hottentots and Oerlams, in all their plundering excursions, capture and drive back with them such Damara youths as they take a fancy to, and they keep them, and assert every kind of right over them. They punish them just as they please, and even shoot them, without any one attempting to interfere. Next in the scale of slavery are those Damaras, Ghou Damup, or Bushmen, who place themselves under Hottentot "protection," and on much the same footing as those among the Hottentots, are the paupers that are attached to different werfts among the Damaras. These savages *court slavery*. You engage one of them as a servant,

and you find that he considers himself your property, and that you are, in fact, become the owner of a slave. They have no independence about them, generally speaking, but follow a master as spaniels would. Their hero-worship is directed to people who have wit and strength enough to ill-use them. Revenge is a very transient passion in their character: it gives way to admiration of the oppressor. The Damaras seem to me to love nothing: the only strong feelings they possess, which are not utterly gross and sensual, are those of admiration and fear. They seem to be made for slavery, and naturally fall into its ways. Their usual phrase with reference to the missionaries is, "Oh, they are wise, but weak;" but Jonker and the Hottentots are, I could almost say, their delight. They wonder at their success.

All over Africa one hears of "giving" men away: the custom is as follows. A negro has chanced to live a certain time in another's employ; he considers himself his property, and has abandoned the trouble of thinking what he is to do from day to day; but leaves the ordering of his future entirely to his employer. He becomes too listless to exist without a master. The weight of independence is heavier than he likes, and he will not bear it. He feels unsupported and lost if alone in the world, and absolutely requires somebody to direct him. Now, if the employer happens to have no further need of the man, he "gives" him, that is to say, he makes over his interest in the savage to a friend or acquaintance; the savage passively agrees to the bargain, and changes his place

without regret; for, so long as he has a master at all, the primary want of his being is satisfied. A man is "given" either for a term or for ever; and it was on this tenure that I held several of my men. Swartboy gave me his henchman; Kahikenè, a cattle-watcher; Mr. Hahn, a very useful man, Kambanya. As a definition of the phrase "giving a man," I should say it meant "making over to another whatever influence one possessed over a savage; the individual who is given not being compelled, but being passive."

Before starting on my return I bought as much corn as I could carry back, which also proved to be exactly as much as I could buy with my stock of beads. I knew by this time pretty well what weights the different oxen could carry, and arranged their saddle-bags accordingly. I always carried a couple of spring balances with me when on ride-oxen, and as they each marked up to forty pounds, by using the two together I could weigh up to eighty pounds, which was as much as I ever wanted on this occasion, though afterwards when ivory had to be carried I was put to shifts for weighing it. It saves infinite trouble in packing to have the two saddle-bags of exactly the same weight, and I am sure that no practice will train the hand to judge with certainty whether they are so; a small heavy thing always feels lighter than its real weight, and a bulky thing heavier. I have constantly tested the guesses that practised muleteers and camel-drivers have made of the weights of things, and often convicted them of great mistakes. In my waggon I

carried a steel-yard, and knew and registered the weight of everything I carried.

I mentioned that the Ovampo had fowls; they are very pretty small bantams, and I bought three—thinking that being a new breed they might have some points about them which would be valuable to poultry fanciers; they eat very little, and laid eggs every day. I put them in an Ovampo basket, covered it with a piece of skin, and made one of the Damara women carry it on her head.

June 15*th.*—We left Nangoro's in company with Chik, and with Tippoo, who did the honours for Nangoro. The oxen kicked excessively with their packs. Kahikenè's black ox ripped up with his horns two of the bags of corn that he carried, and galloped about, kicking and tossing like mad. We caught him at last, and had him down, and sawed off the tips of his horns on the spot. We were about three hours in doing four miles, and had to encamp under a tree; the first start is always the most troublesome part of a journey.

June 16*th.*—Travelled four hours and slept at the vley. The oxen were so stiff that I had to take them on by easy stages. They strayed in the night, and were not recovered till past mid-day. Spooring is out of the question in Ondonga, as the ground is trodden up everywhere. Luckily the oxen had done no damage, only a little trespass, and we went on to Chik's house, where we stopped. There was evidently no means of getting water for the cattle before leaving Ondonga, so we made ready to be off very early. The morning

came, and, to our surprise, Chik would not go with us. We persuaded him to go as far as Netjo's, whom we knocked up out of his snug hut in the chill early morning, and wishing him and his family an affectionate adieu, gave him the last beads that we had, and started away on our old track to Damara-land.

It was with the greatest relief that I once again felt myself my own master, and could go when I liked and as I liked; anything for liberty, even though among the thorn bushes.

I was sincerely grieved that Chik would not return with us, as he was a person of great consequence in the country, and I had hoped that by his means the Damara-land Missionaries would be enabled easily to extend their stations among the Ovampo, which was an object they had long hoped for. They would also have had leisure to learn from him enough of the Ovampo language to make themselves independent of an interpreter. I believe Chik wanted to go, but he could persuade no companions to join him, and, naturally enough, did not like to go alone.

The oxen went very steadily and quickly, and although we had often to adjust their packs, yet we made eight hours' actual travelling by four o'clock; they seemed to know they were going home; we then stopped in a grassy place, and the oxen had the first good meal they had enjoyed for more than a fortnight. It was quite pleasant to watch their lank sides distending. There was no time to be lost, so that we were up and packed and off before day-break. The

night was bitterly cold, and when we started the Damaras and ourselves carried firebrands, breathing their smoke to keep us warm. We travelled five hours and came to the edge of the flat. There are wells of brackish water there. The oxen were utterly tired, for we had gone quickly, and the sun was intensely hot after a cold night. I thought the oxen might choose to drink the water though we could not, so I offpacked and tried them, but they refused although now forty-eight hours without water. They would not eat either. We packed up again after noon and struggled over the flat. The oxen were dead-tired; they tripped their legs together and looked as miserable as could be, but just before nightfall we reached the wells; there is no shelter nor firewood here, but the bleak wind sweeps over the flat, and tired as we were we had to watch the oxen all night. They drank excessively, and then wandered restlessly about in the dark, so that during my watch I could hardly keep them together, though running and walking a great part of the time.

That night fairly broke the constitutions of Frieschland, Timmerman, Buchau, and Kahikenè's ox, and severely tried all the others. The first four were never the same oxen again that they had been before. We stayed at the wells till the forenoon of the next day, and then pushed through the Ovampo werft at the south border of the flat, and offpacked at Etosha.

June 21st.—We arrived at Omutchamatunda, which we now found deserted, except by a few Bushmen.

We pushed on the day after to beyond Otjando, and then following our old spoor we arrived safely at Otchikoto; there we took a day's rest, and amused ourselves in bathing. I made some fish-hooks out of needles, and caught about a hundred small fish, which we eat. We could hear nothing of the waggons from the Bushmen. News travels very slowly in these parts.

Even at Otchikango no information could be obtained. Ootui was deserted, and we were sick with anxiety. If Chapupa had played false with Hans, what should we do?—a handful of men on worn-out beasts, with all the savage Damaras and a dried-up country in front.

June 30th.—Three hours from Okamabuti, we came upon Damaras; they said that the waggons were to have started that very morning to rejoin Chapupa, who had changed his encampment some days previously. Hans, they said, was well, but they knew nothing more. We rode to Namboshua, took a drink of water there, and then, two hours after, came upon our waggons' spoor, and upon Okamabuti at the same time. We anxiously examined the now deserted kraal for tokens that all was right. We found John Morta's cooking fire still burning, and unmistakable signs of his handiwork about, so that no harm had happened to him. Phlebus' spoor was recognised directly; he had a large foot and walked flatly, and we found some signs of John Williams. As the cattle kraal was well trodden down, my oxen were probably all well; after a long search and comparing remarks, we rested

satisfied that no great mishap could have befallen the party, and that Hans had trekked on, either for better pasturage or for some other good reason. It was clear, from what the Damaras said, that the waggons were not very far off; and as the news of our arrival would reach them the same night, I offpacked the tired beasts and intended to give them a good feed in the morning—waiting till Hans either sent me some Damaras or came himself to take me on. As we were offpacking, to my dismay I found that we were one pack ox short, and he was the animal that carried my MSS., nautical almanac, gun tools, bullet moulds, and numberless nick-nacks, that were particularly necessary to me. One never counts oxen on the road; they are so gregarious, that, as a general rule, it is quite unnecessary. In this case we had all been pressing forwards and riding in front of the drove, and none of us could tell whether we had seen the lost one since our first start. It was a very awkward case, for the country was stony in part, and, where not stony, ploughed up with the spoors of the lately migrating Damara oxen. Tired as they were, two of my men and three Damaras went back after him, and, strangely enough, at Namboshua, and by one of those chances that travellers are so often indebted to, one of these Damaras came right upon him as he was lying down, tired, among some thick trees; he was, of course, brought back in triumph.

The next morning a posse of my Damaras came running joyfully to me; they had heard of my arrival at the waggons the previous night, and came to tell me the

news and escort me to them. My party had trekked on with Chapupa, to be near him for the sake of protection, as the Bushmen had of late been stealing a great deal in the neighbourhood.

July 1*st*.—After three or four hours' ride, I recognised the burly form of my faithful servant Hans, on the look-out at the top of a hill. To my extreme relief I learnt that all had gone on well; that Chapupa, although troublesome, had done no mischief; that several sheep had been bought, that the oxen were well, and the axletree was as successful a piece of carpenter's work as the one that had been broken. Chapupa had bought things and never paid for them, and, being in disgrace, sneaked away from me. Kasupi was our principal friend now; he said that it was absurd to try to go back the way we came, as of all the watering-places at which we drank between Kutjiamakompè and Omabondè, a journey of three weeks, not more than two now remained that were not dry. He said that we must return by the Omaramba, where we should find both water and grass, and that he would guide us there and start us. A lad made his appearance, who said that he knew the Omaramba road perfectly, and under these escorts we proceeded. Numbers of Damaras wished to join me: I allowed a few to do so, and my party now numbered thirty-four. We returned by our old road to Okatjokeama, and then turned to the left. At a werft there I found my old guide who had stolen the horse-rug and run away from me. He had the impudence to wear it before my eyes. He was six feet seven inches high, and

large in proportion, and therefore too heavy for me to give a shaking to, and I dared not whip him, so I only pulled the rug off his back and rated him soundly.

We hit the Omoramba and followed it to the confluence of its two branches. Game began now to show, and we had no need to kill any oxen. We had some charming hunts—one after wild boars. Kasupi could not, any more than the other Damaras, give me much information about the road *down* the Omoramba. It seemed most unfavourable to waggon travelling. They said the Omoramba ran between hills where Ghou Damup lived, and the Damaras dare not go there.

If my ride-oxen had not been so entirely worn out, and the country so arid, I should have much liked an excursion in that direction, which, as I have since discovered, would be a most interesting route. Now, however, it was out of the question.

July 12*th*.—My entire werft at Okavarè consisted of eighty cattle, and 110 sheep and goats; of these many belonged to the men, and not to me. I had only seventy cattle and eighty sheep and goats: of these about forty were useful waggon oxen, and fifteen ride and pack, leaving me a surplus of fifteen slaughter oxen and the eighty small cattle. My articles of exchange were at a very low ebb indeed, although I had a small further supply at Walfisch Bay. I had no reason to expect getting more than ten oxen with them in Damara-land; but when I arrived among the Hottentots, I intended to sell one of my waggons for

forty or fifty oxen, which can always be done; and thus becoming independent, should have amply enough for a second excursion on a smaller scale.

We now trekked steadily up the Omoramba, and one day's work was like another's. There were wells every two, three, or four hours, but deep ones, and choked with sand, which we had on every occasion to clear out, working for hours, and often half through the night. The river-bed is sometimes a broad reach of sand with high banks, sometimes imperceptible, except to a very practised eye. Thorns of course hem it in.

The few incidents that occurred on our return journey were these. One night we slept close to water-holes: our encampment was anything but a quiet one; and the dogs barked all night, as they almost invariably did. We had watered the oxen out of a heavy wooden trough that Damaras had made and left at the wells, and this trough blocked up the path-way down to the largest well. In the morning, to our surprise, we found elephant spoors all about us: three large ones and two calves. They had pushed the trough to one side, and walked down to the well till their trunks could reach the water, and had stamped the sand in, and made a great mess of our handiwork. Then they had walked close round us till their minds were satisfied, and finally moved off straight away across country.

A very large springbok was shot, which we weighed against a large and fat sheep that we killed. The first was 120 pounds; the second, 112 pounds. Damara

sheep stand much higher than our English sheep, and have no wool; the hair of their hides is like that of a calf. Hans sold two of his curs to some of the Damaras for two oxen each. I cannot conceive what could have induced them to make such a bargain. They were keen upon dogs, for they offered four oxen for another one, "Watch;" but he was too useful to me in worrying night marauders to be spared.

We had a fine night for chevying hyenas. After one was killed, and everything was silent, I sent a Damara out among the bushes to imitate their howl, that we might hear the others answer, and know where they were. He did it so successfully, that all the dogs were at him in an instant, and he was bitten.

July 17th.—Our old friend the hill Omuvereoom came into sight. The air was very thick and cold at nights. The sky had quite an English November appearance. We found ice about us nearly every morning since leaving Ondonga. For the last three weeks I have observed that there is a vast deal of electricity in the air, every woollen thing crackles when rubbed with the hand. My large black dog "Wolf" is quite a powerful electrical machine when his back is stroked down.

July 25th.—We arrived at Ontikeremba, where there are a great many deep wells, about four feet in diameter, and thirty feet deep. A row of four men contrived to hand up the water out of them; but it was as much as they could do. I can hear nothing of the proceedings of the Hottentots, during my absence, but learnt the full particulars of Kahikenè's death. The bed of the Omoramba is now that of a small

sandy streamlet; yet wells are found in numbers along it.

July 26th.—At Otjikururumè we came in full sight of Diambotodthu, and Omatako was right before us.

July 28th.—Left the Omoramba, along which we had been travelling every day (except two) for more than a fortnight; and on July 29th arrived at Okandjoë.

We had now passed through the midst of Omagundè's country; but he had moved to where Kahikenè had been staying, and therefore I saw nothing of him. Crowds of Damaras and nearly one thousand head of cattle were at Okandjoë, where there is copious well-water. I sent in a civil way to beg the use of two wells for my cattle; but the Damaras were very impudent, and refused. We therefore seized upon the wells, and the Damaras became obliging and highly courteous.

It gave us quite a home feeling to see the hills that we knew so well round about us. I was now safe as regards water; for by my map I knew the distance to Kutjiamakompè, and thence, happen what might, I could pass through to Schmelen's Hope. We heard some news of the missionaries here, that Mr. Hahn had been to Omaruru, and also that the Hottentots had been quiet, and not plundering.

July 31st.—Arrived at Kutjiamakompè, and were once again on our old waggon-spoors. It was strange to see how the dry season had altered the place: I should never have recognised it at a cursory glance. The fine sheet of vley water was now baked earth, and we drove over it to wells which were on the other side.

August 1*st*.—In the clear evening we passed over the ridge which separates the water-shed of the Swakop from that of the Omoramba. The Schmelen's Hope Hills, and those by Jonker, and opposite to Barmen, rose into view at once, and we took our farewell leave of the beautiful cones of Omatako and the other high landmarks that had so long guided us. We found water at Okamabondè, and next day at Okandu, whence I sent a messenger on to Barmen with a note.

August 3*rd*.—We rested at Schmelen's Hope, and, August 4th, arrived safely at Barmen, being a year all but ten days from the time when I sailed from Cape Town, and five months from the day that the waggons left Schmelen's Hope; of these five months ninety days were employed in journeying onwards, independently of such excursions as were made from time to time to look out for roads. It occupied fifty days of travel to reach Nangoro's from Schmelen's Hope, and forty days to come back again. The return distance was 168 hours, or about 462 miles, and we were forty-nine days on the road, nine of them being days of rest or necessary delay. This gives, including stoppages, an average of nine and a half miles a day, which is very fair travelling for a continuance, even over known roads.

CHAPTER IX.

The Waggons are Condemned.—Messengers to the Cape.—The Kaoko.—History of Damara-land.—Ghou Damup genealogies.—Start for Elephant Fountain.—Excessive Drought.—Engage Eybrett.—Sell my Cart and Mules.—Travel from Eikhams.—Shooting Giraffes in the dusk.—Elephant Fountain.—Numerous Pitfalls.—Plundering Expeditions.—The Kubabees reach 'Ngami.—Trouble of taking observations.—Leave Waggon and ride to the East.—Engage Saul.—Hans and a Lion.—We enter the Bushman tract.—Rhinoceros skulls.—Hear of the Kubabees Hottentots.—Start for 'Tounobis.—Shoot a White Rhinoceros.—Reach 'Tounobis.—Elephant in a pitfall.—Prepare for Sport.—Night-Watching for Game.—Rhinoceros Veal.—Opera glasses.—Herd of Elephants.—Fights and Frolics.—Bulk of the Rhinoceros.—A Picturesque Finale.—Spring Hares.—Remarks on my route.—Unicorns and Cockatrices.—Bushmen Springes.—Setting Guns at Night.—Description of Plate.—Poisoned Arrows.

DURING my absence some little news had been received from Europe, for an Englishman had arrived by ship and settled near Walfisch Bay, to try his hand at cattle-trading; and one newspaper had been received through his means. Of my own family I heard no tidings, and of course had been unable to receive any since I had left England, a year and four months previous to this time.

The missionaries receive their communications once in every two years, unless, by some chance accident, a post can be dispatched by ship from Cape

Town. They tried to establish sets of messengers from Rehoboth to the Orange River, but the road is so long and difficult that the plan had to be abandoned. One of these messengers murdered his comrade, and said that he had been eaten by a lion; at another time the letters were spoilt by the rains: on every occasion there was some delay or accident.

I was delighted to find that the Hottentots had remained very peaceable, only those under Cornelius having done any mischief to the Damaras during my absence. Confidence was being restored, and troops of Damaras were gathered about the watering-places and pasturages of the Swakop, which had long been abandoned on account of their dangerous proximity to Jonker.

Now, as regards my own plans, the waggons were pronounced scarcely fit for an overland journey to the Cape. The tires of the wheels were worn out; the mended axletree was of doubtful wood; and the waggons were altogether become rickety. On the other hand, the missionaries expected a vessel some time not earlier than December, and we were now at the beginning of August. If, then, I returned by the ship, I should have August, September, October, and half November, to do what I liked in, and leaving Barmen not later than the end of the first fortnight in November, I could easily push down to the bay in time to join the vessel.

As a way of ridding myself of the waggons and all my remaining properties, I should arrange with Hans to act as agent for me to convert them into oxen, and

drive them for sale down to the colony, by which means I should recover some part of their value.

Then in order to occupy the fifteen weeks that I had to spare, I intended to make a quick journey to the eastward, both for the purpose of seeing something of the Hottentots, and also to find out whether, as I had at first been assured was the case, the Karrikarri Desert was interposed as an impracticable barrier between the sea-coast countries and Lake 'Ngami.

I divided my party into two: one waggon went down with Hans to the bay, to bring back all the articles of exchange that I had left there; and the other waggon, together with all my ride-oxen, went with me by Jonker's village on my road to the east.

To make matters more secure, I dispatched messengers to the Orange River, in obtaining whom Swartboy very kindly assisted me; and among my letters, I wrote one to the agent of the missionaries in Cape Town, offering to bear a certain part of the expense of the vessel, on condition that it was dispatched not earlier than the 1st of December, or later than the last of January. We then busied ourselves for a week in packing, and in repairs, and in enjoying Mr. Hahn's kind hospitality.

Mr. Hahn had made an excursion to Omaruru during my absence, in company with Katjimaha's sons. It is a spring, situated in the neighbourhood of extensive pasturage, a very important place to the Damaras, and about four and a half days' travel from Barmen, being a little way beyond Erongo, —the Ghou Damup mountain that I have already

mentioned. Omaruru is a rendezvous for the caravans that travel between the Damaras and the sea-side Ovampo; and immediately north of it begins a broad barren tract called the Kaoko, which those caravans have to cross, and which, though now very thinly inhabited, appears to have been the original home of the Damara nation.

I heard of the safety of three of my mules who had travelled down to Scheppmansdorf and taken up their quarters there; they grazed, strayed, and slept just where they pleased, for the Hottentots could not manage them. They were five in number when they ran away from me at Schmelen's Hope, but two of them must have been killed on the road by lions; they certainly did not die of starvation, for the other three arrived at Scheppmansdorf very plump and in good condition.

I ought to mention that the horse distemper does not appear to exist at Scheppmansdorf: five or six horses have at different times been kept there, but none have suffered from the disease.

I had much satisfaction in comparing the results of my inquiries with those of Mr. Hahn, with regard to the earlier history of Damara land. It appears undoubted that seventy years ago not a single Damara existed in the parts where I had been travelling, but that they all lived in the Kaoko, while tribes of Bushmen and Ghou Damup possessed the entire country between the Orange River and the Ovampo, excepting only the Kaoko on the north-west, and the central Karrikarri desert on the east.

The Ghou Damup, though treated kindly by the Bushmen, were always considered as inferiors, and the two races never intermarried. The Ghou Damup lived then, as they do now, about the hills, and the Bushmen on the plains. I saw an old Damara, and an old Ghou Damup who remembered this state of things, and several who were born just after it was put an end to; among these was Katjimaha himself who looks about sixty-five years old.

The Damaras at that time made a sweeping invasion eastwards, right across the country, to the very neighbourhood of Lake 'Ngami, and attacked the Mationa (as they call the people who live there).

Subsequently the Mationa retaliated and invaded the land as far as Barmen on one occasion, and on a second attack passed up the Omoramba as far as Omanbondè. The last Mationa invasion took place about twenty-two years ago. The result of all this fighting was that the Bushmen tribes have been exterminated or driven out of the whole pasture country between Barmen and Okamabuti (the place where the waggon broke down), and the Damaras inhabit it in their stead. Eastwards, they are now separated from the Mationa by only a broad strip of barren country. The Ghou Damup live in large communities about a mountainous district on the lower part of the Omoramba, where they appear to be by no means an impoverished nation, but agriculturists and traders with the Ovampo and other nations to the north. My own belief is, that very long ago the Ghou Damup were the aborigines not only

of the present Damara-land but also of the whole country to the south of it half way down to the Orange River, and that they are of a race in every respect kindred to the Ovampo. The Bushmen appear to have invaded and thoroughly conquered the Ghou Damup, for they not only exist as the superior caste of the two, but have also taught them their language, to the entire exclusion of whatever other one they may at some former period have possessed. Those Ghou Damup that I saw have no tradition of any other language than that they used; but the tribes who live on the lower parts of the Omoramba were described as speaking several languages; and some of these were said to be ignorant of Hottentot.

All these bits of information were derived from very many sources; some I received from persons in Damara-land, some from Ghou Damup among the Namaquas, and the rest from Bushmen who lived far to the east of them. The Ghou Damup are abused and tyrannised over by everybody, but servitude has become their nature, and the very name of Ghou which they themselves adopt and use is far from complimentary. Like many other Hottentot names it is not translatable to ears polite. The missionaries for delicacy's sake call them "Hill" Damaras, because they live on the hills.

A standing joke against the Ghou Damup is, that they trace their descent from the monkey tribe. An old man amongst them gave me the following history of his family; he worded it very neatly:—"My great uncle was a baboon, and lived on excellent terms with the rest of the family, but the following occurrence

caused his separation from it. My grandfather had been gambling, and lost all the ornaments, &c., that he had on his person, but wishing to continue the game, requested his brother the baboon to go to my great grandfather, the famous Hadji-Aybib, and beg enough beads from him to form another stake. My great uncle the baboon went, but passing a Hottentot werft by the way, in which were many fierce dogs, before unknown in the country, he became so alarmed at their barking and snapping at him that he ran to the hills, and never dared face man again. Why should not we and the baboons be brothers?" said the old gentleman. "Everybody persecutes us alike. We both live on the hills, eat the same roots, and 'crow' for them with our hands in the same manner!" Hadji-Aybib, my friend's great grandfather, married a Bushwoman for his second wife, who annoyed her step sons by her hauteur, and twitted them on account of their vulgar habits and low connections. Influenced by her, Hadji-Aybib cruelly treated his Damup progeny, and they on their part earnestly longed for his death. One day he was missing, rumour gave out that he was killed, and the sons gave way to the greatest paroxysms of merriment, during which they behaved in such an unseemly manner before the eyes of their fine lady Hottentot connections that on Hadji-Aybib's return,—for he was not killed after all,—they were obliged, from absolute shame, to hide themselves away from his presence, and fled to the hills, bearing with them the reproachful name of Ghou Damup.

August 13*th*.—Our party separated, one detachment

en route to the bay, and Andersson, Timboo, John Morta, Phlebus, and myself, travelling towards Lake 'Ngami. I took only five or six of the most active Damaras with me, and appointed the neighbourhood of Jonker's werft as a place of rendezvous for both parties at the beginning of November.

The dryness of the country was now really alarming; all the watering places that remained were crowded with cattle, and every blade of grass within miles of them was being eaten off. Over a great part of Damara-land rain had not fallen more than ten times during the whole rainy season; and a mortality from actual starvation had already begun among the cattle, and the year will probably be remembered and named by the Damaras as that of the great drought.

It was therefore no easy matter for me to travel about; but I had one advantage on my side, which was, that on the road, when far away from watering places and the grazing limits of the cattle by them, I often found grass, and there I outspanned to sleep, and let the oxen feed, then travelling on in the morning I came to the next watering place at the middle of the day, when the cattle of the natives were all sent off to the fields, and the wells were disengaged. I thus ensured an evening's meal to the oxen, and also one in the early morning, if they chose to eat it, and water in the middle of the day, but no more.

On the road to Jonker we found hardly any grass, and I do not know how I should have been able to keep my cattle at his place, if it were not that a valley was left unoccupied, owing to a superstitious feeling

arising from a cattle watcher having been lately murdered there by the Damaras. Jonker received me very kindly, and I expressed to him how glad I was to hear of the excellent manner in which he had kept order among his people during my absence. He had, I knew, been put to very great trouble in doing so, as the disposition to pillage is general among the Hottentots, and requires a far more despotic ruler to repress than Jonker or anybody else in this republican part of the world is allowed to be.

I found a man settled here who was of great use to me, and whom I engaged; he was white, and born in the Cape; spoke English and Dutch perfectly, and was brought by the missionaries here as half-carpenter, half-schoolmaster. He, however, did not suit them, and had for a long time been dismissed their service; I found him installed as Jonker's prime minister. He spoke Hottentot very fairly, and had a winning manner about him that vastly smoothed down the minor difficulties of my way; and though he was always getting himself and us into scrapes, yet he had a marvellous faculty of creeping out of them again. Eybrett, for that was his name, undertook to guide me to Elephant Fountain, a deserted station on the northern frontier of Amiral's tribe. No waggon had passed that road for years, and the way led along a country which was rarely travelled over, owing to its being a border district between the Damaras and Namaquas.

Elephant Fountain and the country immediately adjacent had been the Ultima Thule of missionaries

and traders, but the Oerlams, under Amiral, had recently extended themselves about forty miles further to the east, and on their late shooting excursions had reached a point considerably more distant. I was assured that the appearance of the land would be found to alter considerably, the thorns and rugged hills of Damara-land giving place to broad plains, and grass, and timber trees. Beyond was the desert which had hitherto been considered quite impassable, except for men on foot, after the rainy season, and which therefore barred out the lands of the west coast from those of Central Africa.

It was principally with a view to try if this desert were really impassable that I proposed now to travel, and my object was to strike upon some road that led from the colony up to Lake 'Ngami. The Lake itself I was indifferent about reaching, for it is of no great size, and might prove a very unhealthy place for us, who had been accustomed so long to the pure air of a high plateau. It was two years since its discovery, and there was every reason to suppose that it was by this time perfectly well known. Lastly, I should never get on amongst the blacks there without an interpreter, being, as they are, deadly enemies to the Damaras, from whose side I should have come. I also looked forward with much pleasure to a little sport, for game had been so scarce in Damara-land that it made shooting a real toil.

I sold my cart and harness which were lying at Otjimbinguè, and the three mules which were at Scheppmansdorf, to Jonker; he gave me twenty oxen

and forty milch goats for them; but all my efforts to buy horses were unavailing. He, however, gave me a mount to Rehoboth, where I went to induce Swartboy to meet Jonker and Cornelius, and settle many matters that were in dispute between them, and also to overawe Cornelius and keep him in better order, for he had lately been stealing a great deal of Damara cattle.

My Hottentot interpreters now were Eybrett and Phlebus; but Eybrett was an educated man, and could interpret from English to Hottentot at once, so that I generally employed him. He was an excellent interpreter into Dutch when he chose to take pains.

We had between us a motley command of languages; for including those of Europe, one or other of the party could converse fluently in nine different languages—English, French, Swedish, Dutch, Danish, Portuguese, Hottentot, Damara, and Movisa; besides having some acquaintance with German, Arabic, Caffre, and a smattering of Ovampo.

It will be tedious to describe my journey now as minutely as I did that in Damara-land, for it was much the same thing over again—uncertainty of the way and want of water; but we had become far quicker and more self-confident in emergencies, and were altogether a very active and efficient body of men. Among my Damaras I had two of the smartest men and best runners that could be found in the country; all of them, indeed, were picked men, and they had become much attached to us, and worked very well, and willingly.

In a few hours from Eikhams we had emerged from the valley of the Swakop on to the high plateau. Thence we followed the Quieep River easterly: this we left for the Noosop, crossing a broad plain, and having some shooting; we then followed the Noosop, and game began to appear in abundance. We passed one great herd of springboks that were migrating; they eat up the grass almost as locusts would on their way. It was by no means so numerous a herd as is often seen in Bechuana country; but the tufts of white hair on the backs of the males were as thickly scattered over the country as daisies on a lawn. We never had to kill oxen,—only sheep now and then, for the sake of the fat; for all the game was very dry; and where you have no vegetables, fat becomes an essential element of food.

It was a great drawback to us that elands were hardly ever seen in this country: they are the staple food of sportsmen in Bechuana-land, and are very fat.

We discovered how to shoot giraffes on foot from Andersson having gone successfully after a herd in the dusk of the evening, when we found that they allowed him to stalk close up to them. They see very indistinctly in the dark. He shot at two, who did not run far when wounded, but seemed bewildered. He fired all his bullets away at them, and brought one to a stand-still, and the other to a slow walk; but they would not fall. He could only find one pebble in the sandy soil to fire out of the gun, instead of a bullet, and that seemed to have no effect upon the animal: he then thought of hamstringing them; but though he

nicked the skin of one deeply, yet as he struck out both with his horns and heels when he did so, it was too dangerous to continue the attempt. In despair, he took his rifle-barrel (which was a common thick thing) from the stock, and kept flinging it at the giraffe's head like a knob-kerrie, and at length the beast dropped. In the morning the other one had walked away; and though he was tracked a couple of miles, yet he could not be found. We jerked the giraffe, that is, cut the flesh that we did not eat into strips, and dried them in the sun. The skin was of great service to us, as our shoes were worn out, and wanted new soles. It is strange to see in how small a compass the meat of the whole animal packs up when it is dried.

Something was shot every day till we came to Kurrikoop, and there we slept out by the water. A buffalo, a gnu, five zebras, two hartebeests, and three roebucks were "bagged" in two nights. The natives of the place had a grand feast: and so had we.

At Elephant Fountain we found Amiral, and about forty men, who had just arrived there, *en route* for a shooting excursion to the east. They take their waggons with them for some days, and then make an encampment, whence they journey short distances on ride-oxen, and shoot what they can, bringing the meat back jerked to the waggon. It was delightful to hear people talk familiarly of the rhinoceros as an every-day kind of game, and we longed for a raid upon them. I had not yet seen a single rhinoceros. One was shot by Andersson and Hans when they went down to the bay, but I was not then present. On the last

shooting excursion Amiral's men had "bagged" forty of them.

Elephant Fountain is a rather copious spring on the side of a black thorny hill, above a narrow river-bed. Herds of animals come here to drink; and the ground at the principal place is bored full of pit-falls. By arranging the bushes in different ways, different sets of paths and pitfalls can be used at pleasure, and the animals are unscared by the smell of the blood of their companions, who may have been caught and slaughtered the preceding evening. No less than thirty-four zebras were entrapped in one night. We could not of course shoot here, as it might frighten the game away, and there was no great temptation, as only zebras and roebucks came to drink. There were a great many lions about, some of whom had lately taken two men, who had sat up watching for game; but none troubled us. In the day-time, while we were waiting for Amiral, a few animals were shot, and jerked as food for the party that was to stay with the waggon, for I intended to let it stop here, and to ride on with Andersson, Eybrett, and Timboo, leaving John Morta and Phlebus behind.

Elephant Fountain acquired its name from the enormous number of tusks that were found in the water of this place. When the Hottentots settled there, the pool into which the water runs was overgrown with reeds, and harboured lions and hyenas, and all kinds of wild beasts. So the reeds were burnt down, and the pool cleared out: it was not at all a large one, perhaps twenty-five paces across; but in

the mud at the bottom of it they found quantities of elephants' bones and tusks, so that a trader bought enough ivory to fill more than one, and I think two waggons with it. Elephants were then numerous at the place, but they have now quitted it.

A very fatal intermittent fever occurs here, and has depopulated the place more than once; it breaks out in April, and rages for two or three months. It does not extend to the west of the place; I cannot say whether or no it does to the east. Amiral told me that the Mationa, or Bechuanas, as he called them, occasionally visited him; but that, having no interpreter, he could not converse with them. One large party of chiefs had just left Wesley Vale. He said that the Bushmen had always told him that the desert to the east was impassable; but that from time to time they had found springs in their hunting excursions; and that very likely there was a way across it, if the Bushmen would only choose to point it out. It seemed that the desert was bare sand opposite to Wesley Vale, four days south of Elephant Fountain, but covered with grass at this latitude. I therefore had good reason to hope that we should turn its flank. Last year a large party of Kubabees Hottentots (who live a few days east of Bethany) rode up to the north, passing alongside of Amiral's country; but far to the east of it, they came to a place called "Tounobis," whence they made plundering excursions on all sides: some against the Damaras, and some against the Mationa, who lived on Lake 'Ngami itself. A nephew of Amiral's, who could write Dutch, was in the expedition, and sent

Amiral a letter about it. He described the boats that were there, and said much about the alligators, who killed very many of their dogs. The Hottentots made a most murderous excursion, having fallen upon a village that was situated on the river, connected with the west of the lake, and cut every person's throat they could lay hands on. They then robbed the huts and decamped with their booty. Carosses, made of skins that were unknown to them, were amongst the plunder. The lake itself they did not dare to go to; a hill or mountain was pointed out to them, at the foot of which not only the lake, but a large werft of natives were; and these they did not venture to approach. I was told that I should probably see the Bushmen, who guided them. Amiral was very anxious to lay hold of these Bushmen, and require them not to guide strangers, as the harm which the Kubabees Hottentots had done would probably be retaliated on his head.

It was most likely on a visit of expostulation, or as spies, that the Mationa chiefs had been to Wesley Vale; but as no interpreter could be found, the interview ended in nothing but an exchange of presents. I heard that there was a woman born among the Mationa, but now naturalised in Amiral's tribe; and I sent messengers long distances to try and bring her, but she was not to be found—only her two half-caste children, who knew nothing but Hottentot.

The country appeared to have become quite devoid of all landmarks, only a few rising heads and long undulating ridges being visible, which I could make no use of in triangulating. I had brought my triangu-

lations to within eleven hours of Elephant Fountain, and, indeed, with a slight gap, to Elephant Fountain itself; but here it seemed that they must cease, so I took a great number of lunars, to fix as accurately as I could the position of the place. I had done the same at Okamabuti, which was the northern limit, or near to it, of my network of triangles; that of Walfisch Bay was given by Captain Owen's survey, and I had taken many sets at Barmen, as a check upon the whole. These were all observed with a large sextant, for which I had contrived a stand; but in travelling on ox-back I was obliged to leave this behind, as being much too cumbrous to carry, and packed a small but excellent circle among plenty of stockings, &c., in a fishing-basket, which I made a man strap on his back. With this circle I had already taken sets for longitude at Ondonga, and I proposed now doing the same at the most eastern point I should arrive at, filling up the intermediate places by a careful dead reckoning, checked by latitudes. I had so few subjects of interest in the journey, that taking sets of observations, which would be a great nuisance to a person under any other circumstances, was to me a source of occupation and a great pleasure, and I slaved at it. It requires some care to "pit" one observation against another, so as to eliminate the error of a doubtful instrument.

The packing and unpacking is troublesome, and an instrument cannot be left for a moment unguarded, or the goats will butt at it, the sheep and dogs run over it, or the oxen brush against it; and it is cold work, having to leave the fire, that its glare may be avoided,

and to wait for the culminating of one star after another.

We were detained longer than we ought to have been at Elephant Fountain, by a break-down of Amiral's waggon, just as he was starting, but, as it was a light vehicle and the roads were level, a piece of green wood was made into an axletree, and we were ready to proceed in two days. Our dates were, left Jonker, August 30th; arrived at Elephant Fountain, September 14th; proceeded, September 19th.

Hardly a Hottentot lived at Elephant Fountain, but there were large werfts of Berg Damaras there, who of course belonged to Amiral. I therefore felt no fear whatever at leaving my two men, for there *is* security of life in the country of the Hottentots, and we parted in high spirits for a six weeks' tour, my time being limited by the expected arrival of the ship at Walfisch Bay, from which I was now distant 156 hours (390 miles), or, with a single span of oxen, at least a month's journey off.

We rode over to 'Twas in eleven hours, following the track of Amiral's waggon, and there we found a large werft. I engaged a Dutchman, by name Saul, whom I found there. He was to take two or three pack-oxen, and to pack them himself, and to help my party in everything. He was a well-known shot, spoke Hottentot perfectly, and was just the man I wanted.

It seemed to me that, small as Amiral's tribe was, it was infinitely the most civilised of all I had seen, and seemed possessed of more resources by far than either Swartboy's or Cornelius'. I mean that, with

the usual articles of exchange, whatever was wanted, might be found and bought there with far more facility than elsewhere. The others keep no "stock in hand" of anything, but scramble on from hand to mouth. If you want a pair of leather trousers made, the goat must be killed and the skin dressed, for nobody cares to keep a spare piece of leather. In the same way with carosses, each man has his own sleeping things, but no overplus by him to sell. Every Hottentot has his ride-ox, which he will not dream of parting with until he has broken in another one to take its place, and there is a want of *capital* everywhere, so that although a traveller may be abundantly supplied with articles of exchange, and the natives around him by no means badly off, yet it does not at all follow that he will find anybody to barter with him as he journeys through their country.

September 24th.—We left 'Twas on our shooting excursion. I took no dogs: mine were useless curs for anything else but night-watching; and under the guidance of Saul we travelled five hours and a half, passing a succession of little springs on our way. Early the next morning we went three hours to the place of rendezvous, and Amiral came shortly afterwards: numbers of other Hottentots soon dropped in, and we had a very merry evening, telling tales, and talking about the habits of animals. Of course we had lion and elephant stories in abundance. I was curious to know what animals here were the most fatal to man, and we counted over all the deaths that we could think of. Buffaloes (though not common here) killed the

most, then rhinoceroses, and lastly, lions. Areep, the predecessor of Cornelius, as chief of his tribe, was killed by a black rhinoceros. It is curious how many people are wounded by lions, though not killed. A very active Damara, who was some time with me in Damara-land, but who stayed behind as I journeyed up the country, was in a dreadfully mangled state when I returned. He had found a lion in the act of striking down his ox, and rushed at him with his assegai: he gave him a wound that must have proved mortal, for the assegai went far into his side; but the lion turned upon him, and seizing him, bit one elbow-joint quite through, and continued worrying him until some other Damaras ran up and killed the animal. My servant, Hans, had a very narrow escape some time since. He was riding old Frieschland (the most useful ox I had, but now worn out by the Ondonga journey) along the Swakop, when he saw something dusky by the side of a camelthorn-tree, two hundred yards off. This was a lion, that rose and walked towards him: Hans had his gun in his gun-bag by the side of his saddle, and rode on, for there is no use in provoking hostilities single-handed with a lion, unless some object has to be gained by it, as every sportsman at last acknowledges. The coolest hand and the best shot are never safe, for a bullet, however well aimed, is not certain to put the animal *hors de combat*. After the lion had walked some twenty or thirty yards, Frieschland, the ox, either saw or smelt him, and became furious. Hans had enough to do to keep his seat; for a powerful long-horned ox tossing his head about and

plunging wildly is a most awkward hack for the best of jockeys. The lion galloped up. He and Hans were side by side. The lion made his spring, and one heavy paw came on the nape of the ox's neck, and rolled him over; the other clutched at Hans' arm, and tore the sleeve of his shirt to ribbons, but did not wound him, and there they all three lay. Hans, though he was thrown upon his gun, contrived to wriggle it out, the lion snarling and clutching at him all the time; but for all that, he put both bullets into the beast's body, who dropped, then turned round, and limped bleeding away into the recesses of a broad thick cover; and of course Hans, shaken as he was, let him go. There were no dogs to follow him, so he was allowed to die in peace; and subsequently his spoor was taken up, and his remains found.

Probably many more people are killed by lions than one hears of, for the most frequent victims are paupers who scatter themselves about the country, squatting on the ground and crowing pignuts; they become so absorbed in their occupation that a lion could easily crouch behind and spring upon them. Numbers of people are reported to be missing in Damara-land, but no one cares to search out their fate. I made a list once of the people I had met with who had been wounded by lions, but I have lost it. It was a very long one. The wounds were always bad ones to heal. They frequently became almost well, and then broke out afresh.

26th.—We were now fairly *en route*, and had entered the Bushman country; we travelled along the brow of a long ridge that rose insensibly to perhaps 1000 feet

above a wide plain, which stretched far away to the east, and was covered with timber trees;—this was the margin of the great desert. I was told that we should continue journeying along this ridge till we reached the furthest point that Amiral's men had yet travelled to, and thence our course would, if we intended to go to 'Tounobis, lie across this plain.

The news of our shooting expedition had spread far and wide, and Damaras flocked like crows from all quarters to share in the food. The place where we slept on the 26th was a charming spot, among black-thorn trees, lighted up by fires in all directions, round each of which were grouped parties of our guests. We steadily rode on, keeping ahead of Amiral's party, and on the evening of the second day we arrived at the first great shooting place. It was a picturesque gorge in the ridge which led down to the plain, and in which was a succession of small springs. Rhinoceros skulls were lying in every direction, but strangely enough only one spoor could be seen. The whole of that night did Saul and I watch without seeing anything but a jackal. It was very disappointing, but the animals clearly were not there. We therefore pushed on. Saul had told us that the rhinoceroses would begin trooping in at nightfall, and that we should continue firing at them till daybreak, and I had believed him. Forty were killed here about a month since; I could not doubt it, for I counted in a small space upwards of twenty heads; but I suppose that a vast number were also wounded, and that the whole game was fairly scared from the place. Amiral's men were

hard up for food; each man came on his ride-ox, and carried nothing with him.

On the 28th we arrived at the furthest place the Namaquas had explored to. We saw about a dozen fresh spoors of elephants, and a few of rhinoceroses. I tried all I could to make the people encamp out of ear-shot of the water but they would not. No elephants came that night, but a rhinoceros, a lion, a hyena, and a gnu were "bagged." The Damaras were only allowed the carrion, as Amiral's suite of forty men all had to be fed: these poor people were in a sad state; they searched for pieces of old rhinoceros hide, the skin of animals that had been slaughtered here before, and which had dried in the sun before wild beasts had had time to devour it. This cooked in the fire and beaten with stones to make it soft enough to chew is not at all bad, and I have often eaten it; but there was not enough of it to feed the whole crew of Damaras, neither were there pignuts here for them to crow, and they were, consequently, in great distress.

Several Bushmen came to us here, of the tribe that lived at 'Tounobis; the Namaquas can hardly understand them; they laugh excessively at the odd double way in which they pronounce their clicks. One man, the son of the chief whose name means "Buffalo," was much the most intelligible, and I engaged him at once as guide. He told us all about the Kubabees Hottentots, how they came, and where they went, whom they killed, and whom they robbed, and gave us every particular. All the Bushmen were well acquainted with the great waters to the north-east (the lake

'Ngami and its rivers), and described the boats on them, and mimicked the alligators and hippopotami. They had heard also of the Soun Damup, that tribe of Ghou Damup that live in an independent state along the lower part of the Omoramba, and pointed out the direction of their country. They knew of waggons having gone to Lake 'Ngami, and said that they had some things which were given to them by the people who travelled in them, whom they particularly described. They however protested that the country was, in this peculiarly dry season, impassable beyond 'Tounobis.

How far this place was we could not well make out, but it certainly was a long journey without water; tired and footsore as the oxen were, I was determined however to attempt it. The Bushmen declared that the game was all scared away from where we were; but that we should see immense quantities at 'Tounobis. One informant asserted that the buffaloes were so thick upon the ground that we should have great difficulty in driving the waggons through them. But they all agreed that near 'Tounobis it would be dangerous to travel at night, as the wild animals would certainly charge us and our oxen when we met them on the way.

We started for 'Tounobis on the afternoon of Oct. 1st with Amiral and half of his men; after about three hours we came to a little well that the Hottentots who were before us had just drank dry, and, going on, to our delight saw two huge white rhinoceroses, three or four hundred yards on one

side of us. They are indeed immense creatures, so far longer than the black ones, and their horns so much larger. The rhinoceros now in the Regent's Park Gardens is a black rhinoceros; it is much the most vicious of the two kinds, but nothing like the size of the other. We all tumbled off our oxen, some twenty of us (the others had returned to Amiral's waggons), and ran helter-skelter through the bushes, each his own way, till we were pretty near them, and then, as one trotted up to see what was the matter, a volley was blazed into him, that bowled him over like a hare. The other one took a sweep and escaped unshot. The rapidity with which the slaughtered one was cut up was perfectly astonishing. I minuted the whole occurrence; it only took twenty minutes, and we were in our saddles again thirty-five minutes after we had left them. It must be recollected that three-penny pocket-knives are not the best of instruments to make an impression on rhinoceros hide. There is no knife so good as a common butcher's knife; as a general rule, soft steel, or even iron, is far better than hard steel, because you can sharpen the first on any bit of stone, and the metal does not splinter when it comes against a bone.

We followed an elephant path, which went as straight as a Roman road. I took its direction several times with an azimuth compass, and it did not vary four degrees. We travelled till past nine, having been on the move for six and a quarter hours.

The next day, starting very early, poor Timmerman and Frieschland both knocked up; they had never

recovered the Ondonga journey: we drove them as far as we could, but it was no use, and as we of course could not wait in the middle of the plain without water, we had to leave the poor creatures to their fate.

This day we managed eleven hours' actual travelling, and could have easily pushed on again at midnight, but the Bushmen begged us not, as we were coming to where the rhinoceroses were very numerous, and assured us that if we started in the morning we should arrive at 'Tounobis before the heat of the day. This we did; we passed along a labyrinth of wild beasts' paths, put up one rhinoceros, and, after four hours, a valley in front where smoke rose among the trees announced that we had arrived at 'Tounobis. We hurried to the water to look for spoors, and now we were, without any doubt, in a game-country. The river-bed was trodden like the ground in a cattle fair by animals of all descriptions. The water lay in pools among rocks, and there were evident marks of where the water had stood at the preceding evening, and the depth to which it had been drunk out by the animals during the night; by the sides of these holes were the circular walls of loose stones, two or three feet high, that the Kubabees Hottentots had built up as screens, from behind which to shoot.

A little way off were crowds of Bushmen; we went to them, and found them clustered round one of a series of deep uncovered wells, about twelve feet across and eight or ten deep, and very close together, into which an elephant had been pushed the preceding night by his comrades, as they had scrambled in

droves to drink, and there he lay, just killed, and great pieces of flesh were being cut off and hauled up from his carcase.

All this was delightful, and we offpacked our lean oxen in the highest spirits about a quarter of a mile from the water, in the midst of a thick grove of trees. Amiral encamped near us; we made a kraal and settled down for at least a week's pleasuring. As soon as the elephant was disposed of, I collected all the chief Bushmen in a ring, and gave them tobacco and so forth, and began asking them about the country further on ahead. One of my men came to say that he had just found a Bushman cooking with a large iron pot; this was a sure sign of the neighbourhood of civilised man. The Bushman said that it was given to them by people from a waggon some distance to the east, and who had gone to the lake during the previous rainy season. The man who had guided the Kubabees Hottentots lived here—Toes-u-wap was his melodious name. He and the other Bushman wore great numbers of elephant hair necklaces, with three or four beads strung on each of them; they are, as I now find, worked after the manner that the English ladies call "tatting." Old Buffaloe's son and Toes-u-wap were the only two who could understand much of the language of the Hottentots; they interpreted for us to the other Bushmen as well as they could, but our conversation was far from fluent. Several of these Bushmen knew the Mationa language, and as I had a little MS. Sichuana dictionary with me, I asked the Sichuana names for sixty words; of

these about twenty were identical with those in my dictionary, twenty were somewhat like them, and the other twenty I could not find. I presume, therefore, that their language is Sichuana, or a dialect of it. The Bushmen were unanimous in saying that our next stage to the east was longer than the one we had just travelled. The season was so excessively dry that all the wells were exhausted. The Kubabees Hottentots had passed by this place in the dry season, but it was subsequent to an ordinarily rainy summer, and they left 'Tounobis in the afternoon, travelled all night, and next midday drank water with reeds, after their manner, from a place where the sand was damp; on the ensuing day they came to a Bushman werft, and so on every day till the fifth, when they reached a Mationa cattle post; they call it Eisis in Hottentot, Chuèsa in Mationa language; from there the hills that border the great water (river or lake I am not sure which) can be seen. There is said to be much game there.

We had great difficulty in making the Bushmen distinguish between the lake and the rivers; they called the whole water-country by one name—Tl' Annee. However, I will not enter at length into these details, as more accurate information will certainly be received before long from the whites, or whiter races, who are now steadily pushing northwards.

We repaired the circular walls of loose stones that were to form our shooting-screens. The lower they are the better, generally speaking, as being less likely to attract attention; but when it can be managed, a

wall about two feet nine inches high is much the most convenient to shoot over, as a man's position is not cramped when he kneels down and fires from behind one of these: they ought to be six or seven feet across. A hole in the ground is sometimes made instead of a wall; but generally speaking, the neighbourhood of large watering-places in these parts is a mass of limestone rock, into which one cannot dig.

It is one of the most strangely exciting positions that a sportsman can find himself in, to lie behind one of these screens or holes by the side of a path leading to a watering-place so thronged with game as 'Tounobis. Herds of gnus glide along the neighbouring paths in almost endless files: here standing out in bold relief against the sky, there a moving line, just visible in the deep shades; and all as noiseless as a dream. Now and then a slight pattering over the stones makes you start; it jars painfully on the strained ear, and a troop of zebras pass frolicking by. All at once you observe, twenty or thirty yards off, two huge ears pricked up high above the brushwood; another few seconds, and a sharp solid horn indicates the cautious and noiseless approach of the great rhinoceros. Then the rifle or gun is poked slowly over the wall, which has before been covered with a plaid, or something soft, to muffle all grating sounds; and you keep a sharp and anxious look-out through some cranny in your screen. The beast moves nearer and nearer; you crouch close up under the wall, lest he should see over it and perceive you. Nearer, nearer still; yet somehow his shape is indistinct, and perhaps his position unfavourable to

warrant a shot. Another moment, and he is within ten yards, and walking steadily on. There lies a stone, on which you had laid your caross and other things, when making ready to enter your shooting-screen; the beast has come to it, he sniffs the taint of them, tosses his head up wind, and turns his huge bulk full broadside on to you. Not a second is to be lost. Bang! and the bullet lies well home under his shoulder. Then follows a plunge and a rush, and the animal charges madly about, making wide sweeps to right and left with his huge horn, as you crouch down still and almost breathless, and with every nerve on the stretch. He is off; you hear his deep blowing in the calm night; now his gallop ceases. The occasional rattling of a stone alone indicates that he is yet a-foot; for a moment all is still, and then a scarcely audible "sough" informs you that the great beast has sunk to the ground, and that his pains of death are over.

The animals are picked up in the morning; but it is not very easy to find them. Spooring is, in most cases, quite out of the question, on account of the numberless tracks. The Bushmen jerked every particle of the meat of all the animals that we killed, excepting that which we used ourselves. I like rhinoceros flesh more than that of any other wild animal. A young calf, rolled up in a piece of spare hide, and baked in the earth is excellent. I hardly know which part of the little animal is the best, the skin or the flesh.

The Hottentots shot away a great many bullets at rhinoceroses, and did, I dare say, a great deal of

mischief; for they lie six or seven together in each shooting-screen, and blaze volleys at long distances—often thirty or forty yards—at the rhinoceros. The consequence is that they "bag" but very few, compared to the number that they fire at; the others most likely linger on for a few days, and then lie down and die elsewhere. One night Andersson and myself were lying out together when a rhinoceros came, that I fired at. Something smaller was following at its heels; but we could not see what, on account of the shade of the dark bushes. It was a brilliant moonlight; and we were foolish enough to leave our screen, and poke about after the animal, which luckily we never found. In the early morning Andersson went to look for the game that had been shot; and first followed the spoor of the rhinoceros we had been seeking. He soon found the animal lying dead among the bushes; and he walked carelessly up, with rifle over his shoulder, when as he was just upon the animal, a full-grown calf rushed out from behind its dead mother right at him. He had a very narrow escape, for the creature brushed by him in the narrow pathway: he was about as large as an ox, and his spoor was half size. Had we come upon them the preceding night, we should have run some risk. On one occasion a rhinoceros that he fired at, brushed down the stones of one side of his shooting-place.

If I were to travel again on a shooting-tour, I should certainly take a large opera-glass with me. It is one of the most perfect of night-glasses, besides being the most useful of telescopes. I should think it would put

a man's sight in the dusk on a par with that of wild beasts generally; and it is so portable and manageable an instrument, that I should never lie out watching for animals without one.

Since my return to England I have often amused myself at night in trying their powers, which certainly are marvellous. At sea they are coming into general use, and more than one naval officer of considerable experience, in chasing slavers, has assured me of their great superiority over the ordinary cumbrous night telescope. Talking of these things, I may add, that a powerfully magnifying telescope is of very little use in tropical Africa; the air is always seething and waving from the heat, so that images are seldom sufficiently distinct to be worth magnifying.

I generally used the "direct" telescope of my sextant for day purposes; it is in fact a small single opera-glass, and I liked it very much.

Elephant shooting was out of the question at 'Tounobis for men in our position, without horses and without dogs. The river-bed is perfectly bare, and very light in colour, from the quantity of slabs of limestone. I should be extremely sorry to be chased by any animal over it. The Hottentots made such a noise that the elephants only came down twice whilst I was there; the first time we ran up to them and fired among their legs; there were fourteen in the herd, fine fellows, standing in a row fronting us in the open moonshine. None of us dared go nearer than sixty yards; we there had the shelter of a low slab in the limestone, but beyond the ground was quite flat.

I should think the legs were the best part to fire at in these cases, because if the bullet strikes the bone it is sure to break it, and an elephant on three legs is like a waggon on three wheels, quite brought to a stand-still; and, again, if the bone be missed, the wound, if any, is only a flesh wound, and does not kill the animal. Our shots produced no effect, except some very angry trumpeting from the elephants, who first faced us and then decamped. The second time we let them alone, and a young bull fell into one of the wells, which we shot. I think I would have given anything for horses at 'Tounobis. I should have enjoyed myself amazingly if I had had them.

There were no lions whatever there; they and rhinoceroses do not hit it off together, and are seldom found in numbers at the same place. A rhinoceros is a sulky morose brute, and it is very ridiculous to watch a sedate herd of gnus bullied by one of them. He runs among them and pokes about with his horn, while they scamper and scurry away from him in great alarm. He surely must often kill them.

For my own taste, I should like to spend nights perched up in some tree with a powerful night glass watching these night frolics and attacks. I really do not much care about shooting the animals, though it makes a consummation to the night work, as the death of the fox does to a fox hunt, but it is the least pleasurable part of the whole. Great fun seems to go on among the different animals; jackals are always seen and are always amusing; their impudence is

intolerable; they know that you do not want to shoot them, and will often sit in front of your screen and stare you in the face. Sometimes, whilst straining your eyes at the dimly seen bushes about you, the branched stem of one gradually forms itself into the graceful head of some small antelope. The change is like that of a dissolving view, the object had been under your notice for a minute, yet you could not tell when it ceased to be a bush and became an animal. The young rhinoceroses must be much chased by the hyenas and wild dogs, for you never find one, either young or old, whose ears do not show marks of having been sadly bitten.

I do not think an elephant gives anything like the idea of bulk and power that the white rhinoceros does. An elephant is so short, and so high upon his legs, that he looks what jockeys would call "weedy" in comparison to the low and solid rhinoceros. The largest of these that we shot was eighteen feet long and six high; the head and neck forming, I should say, a third of the entire length. If a creature of this size be imagined against the wall of a room, an idea may be formed of his immense size. Their rush is wonderfully quick; they seem to me to get up their speed much quicker than a horse or any other animal I know. I really think that if a rhinoceros and horse caught sight of one another at the same instant, when not more than ten yards apart, the beast would catch the steed. Their movements are amazingly rapid when they receive a bullet.

Oct. 7th. I had a most picturesque finale to a rhinoceros

hunt. The Bushmen came to tell me that a black rhinoceros was lying wounded under some trees, about an hour off, and very savage, so I went to him and put him up with a bullet as he lay twenty-five yards from me. After the scrimmage which ensued, I ran after him, he going a lame trot and I as hard as I could pelt, putting three or four bullets into him at long distances, and loading as I ran. At length we came to the edge of an open flat that was about 200 hundred yards across. At the further side of that was a mound, on the top of which stood a fine overshadowing tree, and in the middle of the flat was a scraggy rotten stump, and two or three dead branches. The rhinoceros went across this, climbed the mound, and stood at bay under the tree. I did not much like crossing the open flat, but I thought I could certainly run two yards to his three, which would take me back in safety among the bushes, so I went my best pace to the middle of the flat, keeping the dead branches between me and him; they were a mere nothing, but a rhinoceros' sight is never keen, and his eyes were, I dare say, dim from his wounds. As soon as I came to the tree, I dropped down on my knee, steadied my shaking hand against one bough, for I had run very far and was exhausted, and, resting the muzzle of my heavy rifle in the fork of another, took a quick shot and gave the beast a smart sharp sounding blow with a well-placed bullet. He did not start nor flinch, but slowly raised his head, and then dropping it down, poured volumes of crimson blood from his mouth. He did this again and again; at

length he staggered a very little, then he put his fore legs out and apart from each other, and so stood for some seconds, when he slowly sunk to the ground upon his broad chest and died. I sketched the scene from memory when I returned, regretting that I had not had a pencil with me at the time to do it more justice, for the dying beast with the branched tree above him was quite a study for an artist. Having shot animals till we were tired, a pleasant moonlight evening was spent on much smaller game—the spring-hare, as the Dutch call it. It is a creature about two feet long, shaped like a kangaroo in body and tail, but with a different head; it burrows and lives in holes all day, but at night frisks about and grazes.

We and the Bushmen arranged ourselves in large circles, enclosing fresh patches of ground each time, and then beat up towards the centre. We generally enclosed two or three of these funny creatures, who hopped about in the oddest way, and we rushed in and assassinated them with sticks. The sinews of their powerful tails form excellent materials for sewing carosses.

I worked hard to fix the longitude of 'Tounobis, which I did more successfully than I could have hoped, as my instrument was a small and not very legible one, and for want of oil I had to read off the observations by firelight.

The Bushmen assured me that the character of the country between that place and the lake was of exactly the same description as that around us, a sandy soil with not unfrequent dried-up vleys, and

covered with trees, but by no means so thickly as to impede the progress of a waggon.

In fact, if a person wanted to go from Walfisch Bay to the lake, he would have an excellent waggon road after he had left Eikhams (Jonker's place), one day behind him. He should follow the Quieep River as far as it goes eastwards, and then make a straight course for Kurri-koop, taking the chance of vley water by the road; from Kurri-koop, through Elephant's Fountain to 'Twas, all is excellent; thence he should follow the foot of the ridge and not the top of it, as we had done, sending the oxen to water up the gorges. In the twenty-one hours' journey to 'Tounobis, three or four large vleys are passed, in which water would lie for many months. From there onwards I should have no fear whatever in the rainy season, even if the Bushmen refused to guide me, because the character of the country is adapted for holding water; but from Damara-land to the Ovampo no person could think of travelling without guides, unless there was a recent track to follow. If he once strayed from the path he would be hopelessly involved in the thorn thicket.

I fancy that the Bushmen spoke truth about the want of water ahead, as the droves of animals who had congregated in the neighbourhood of 'Tounobis continued drinking every night, the repeated firing being insufficient to drive them away; it seemed as though they had no other neighbouring watering-place to go to.

As the Bushmen learnt to understand our Hottentot a little better, we had some long talks about the

animals on the river that joins the western end of the lake; that there are many there quite new to the Hottentots is beyond doubt, as several carosses were stolen by the Kubabees and brought back south, and the skins that many of these were made from were quite unknown to them. The Bushmen, without any leading question or previous talk upon the subject, mentioned the unicorn. I cross-questioned them thoroughly, but they persisted in describing a one-horned animal, something like a gemsbok in shape and size, whose horn was in the middle of its forehead, and pointed forwards. The spoor of the animal was, they said, like that of a zebra. The horn was in shape like a gemsbok's, but shorter. They spoke of the animal as though they knew of it, but were not at all familiar with it. It will indeed be strange if, after all, the creature has a real existence. There are recent travellers in the north of tropical Africa who have heard of it there, and believe in it, and there is surely plenty of room to find something new in the vast belt of *terra incognita* that lies in this continent.

Of another fabulous monster, the cockatrice, a most widely spread belief exists. The Ovampo, the Bushmen of this place, and Timboo, all protested that there is such a creature, and that they had often seen it. They described it as a snake, sometimes twelve feet long, and as thick as the arm; slender for its length, with a brilliantly variegated skin; it has a comb on the head exactly like a guinea-fowl, but red, and has also wattles; its cry is very like the noise that fowls make when roosting—I do not mean crowing,

but a subdued chucking; its bite is highly venomous, and it is a tree snake. I heard an instance of ten cows having been bitten one after the other; they said that sometimes people when on their way home at night hear a chucking in the tree, and think that their fowls have strayed, and as they are peering about under the branches to see where they are, the snake darts down upon them and bites them. It appears to be a particularly vicious snake. I have generally heard it called "hangara." I never heard of its possessing wings.

Since my return I have had my attention directed to a recent book, Mr. Gosse's "Notes of a Naturalist in Jamaica," in which he mentions the prevalence of the same belief there, and relates several reported facts relative to the creature. In the Penny Cyclopædia, under the head cockatrice, many old drawings of these snakes are reproduced, and are worth looking at; they differ much in character from one another, and seem to have been derived from different originals. I can give no clue to the fable of the cockatrice's eggs.

The Bushmen of 'Tounobis are far superior to the Damaras in the art of catching animals; their springe is a very simple one. I admired the simplicity of the method by which the antelopes were induced to leap into the middle of it; an unpractised hand would have made a fence as though he were laying out a steeple-chase course, but the Bushmen simply bend a twig across the pathway, which does not in the least frighten the animal, but which, in the gaiety of his

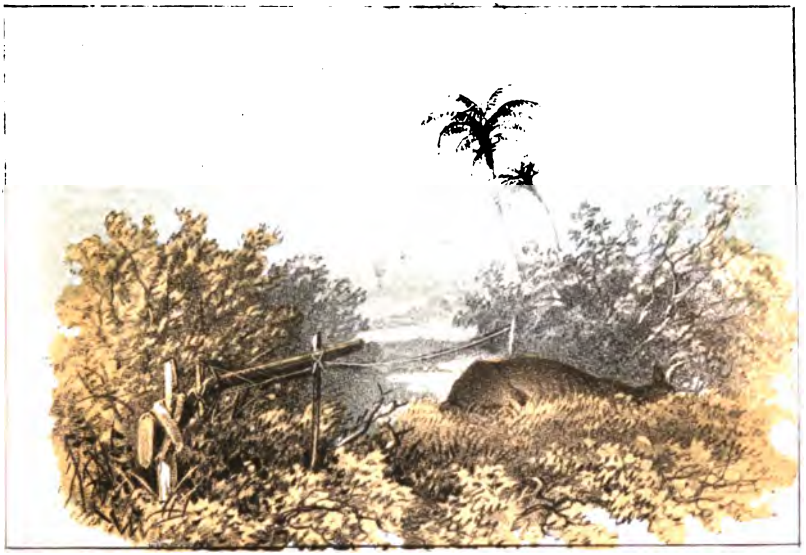
heart, he overleaps. The pitfalls are neatly made; there is, however, nothing in them which an English gamekeeper would not contrive as well.

I must take this opportunity of explaining to the uninitiated how to set a common gun (as a spring gun) to shoot game in the night. The use of such a contrivance is obvious. Hyenas, perhaps, vex and trouble you night after night, and it is a horrid bore to sit up through the cold when sleep is in these tropical climes so peculiarly grateful, simply for the chance of shooting the worthless animal; it is far simpler to have a gun in his path, and let him pull the trigger himself, to his own destruction. Again, as to lions, they do real mischief; and, after all, they are not noble animals whose character entitles them to the privilege of a code of honour, but skulking, troublesome creatures, who give infinite annoyance, and will seldom wait to be shot at. In England one thinks differently, but a traveller who has large herds of cattle with him is only too glad to exterminate lions out of the land, and a spring-gun is the best way of doing this. This is my creed, though I personally am guiltless of its use upon the king of beasts. The way of setting a gun is very simple; everybody has a sort of general conception how an animal when he chests a string shall in some way pull the trigger, and be shot, but without a more definite notion considerable difficulty would in practice be found in making the necessary adjustments. The plate (next page) will explain how to do it. A piece of stick is lashed across the narrow part of the stock of the gun in such

a way as to have a slight play backwards and forwards; a string from the lower part of the stick is fastened to the trigger, one from the upper leads through the ramrod tubes (the ramrod being taken out), and passes across the pathway; it is evident that when an animal pushes the string the gun will go off. A few points have to be observed; one is, that the string should not be too tight, else as soon as it is touched the trigger will be pulled, and the bullet make only a skin wound in front of the animal's chest. The other, a very important point, is that the height to which the gun is lashed should be such as to send the bullet through the beast's heart, or thereabouts. The rule is, that for a hyena the barrel should be as high as a man's knee from the ground, but for a lion a span (or eight inches) higher. Neither the string nor the stick that is lashed to the stock, and which acts as a lever, should be too strong, lest, if the animal carries all before him in a rush, they should not break, but the gun be torn from its supports and smashed.

When a lion's death is determined upon by means of a spring-gun, advantage is taken of the first animal that he kills; this is probably found half eaten, and the lion is sure to return to his prey the ensuing night. Bushes are then put round the carcase, a doorway is made to one side of a couple of posts, against these two posts the gun is lashed, and the trigger-string passes across the doorway to the opposite side (see plate).

I have never seen instances of native poison doing much mischief; that of the Damaras is in practice very harmless. I have seen plenty of people who had been



SETTING A COMMON GUN AS A SPRING-GUN.

Drawn on Stone by W.L. Walton

HOTTENTOT METHOD OF CARRYING A GUN ON HORSE OR OX-BACK

John Murray, Albemarle Street. 1853

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wounded by poisoned arrows, and have dressed their wounds, but saw no great harm experienced from them. The poison becomes so hard and dry on the arrows that it will not dissolve. The Bushman poison is far stronger and more complicated; the manufacture of it is kept secret, but many ingredients are put into the composition. Beside vegetable poisons the Bushmen assured me that the poisonous black spider (a kind of tarantula) is an important ingredient. It seems to be for its size, the most venomous of creatures. Death is very frequently the consequence of its bite. Amiral's son, who was with me, had lingered between life and death for a long time after having been bit by one, and his escape was considered as a singular piece of good fortune. I saw one once; it happened to be among my bed clothes, and was a nasty creature with huge nippers; though a very quick runner it had comparatively short legs. When I teased it with a little twig it snapped its nippers together and made quite a noise with them.

Throughout our journey we have had great good luck as regards poisonous animals, nobody but Timboo having been bitten, and that only by a scorpion, but we suffered pretty severely from hornet's stings, both at Otjimbinguè and elsewhere; the oil from our tobacco pipes was the panacea in all these cases.

CHAPTER X.

Hear the fate of my two Oxen.—Plan an attack to avenge them.—Make an attack on two Werfts.—Catch some Culprits.—Hottentot passion for onslaught.—Return to Eikhams.—Best sort of travelling Compass.—MS. and other Almanacs.—Watches and Alarums.—Large packs of Lions.—A Tale learnt from tracks.—Accidents with guns.—Methods of carrying them on horseback.—Description of the plate.—Travelling Dress.—Colours most suited for Sportsmen.—Bright Colours of Skulking Animals.—Rationale of them.—Join Hans' party.—Begin to break up the Expedition.—Travel down the Swakop.—Reach Walfisch Bay.—Whales, Sharks, and Ostriches.—Retrospects.—Leave Africa.

In a week the Hottentots became tired of 'Tounobis; they said that their wives were left without provisions, &c., and Amiral said that he must return. I had no object in staying longer, for I became tired of massacring the animals, and it is better when on a journey not to rest oxen longer than a week, unless you can afford at least a month's delay, as their galled backs become half healed, and they lose their working condition, without having time to really recruit their strength. My oxen were all in a very poor way, but I now cared little, as I was homeward bound. We left 'Tounobis Oct. 10th, and arrived safely at Okomavaka, with no incident except a fright from all the oxen having run away the second night that we were on the road.

My first inquiries were about the fate of poor Timmerman and Frieschland, and I at last found out their history from some wandering Damaras, for they never can keep a secret. The two oxen had both returned to Okomavaka, but a lion caught Timmerman, and in the morning the Damaras found him half eaten; they then spoored and found Frieschland whom they stabbed and eat. I discovered who the man was that actually killed my ox; he was Kaipanga, the captain of a werft of these wandering Damaras, and who naturally had decamped when he heard of our arrival.

I therefore held a consultation with Amiral on the subject, whose eyes glistened with pleasure at the notion of a raid upon the Damara werft. I, of course, stipulated that we should have no firing, but only catch the culprits and flog them. I had been desirous of witnessing the arrangement of a Hottentot attack, and this case occurred opportunely, so I desired Amiral to manage everything in exactly his own way, which he did. He found out where Kaipanga was staying; it was opposite to a gorge two hours ahead of us, and down in the flat at the foot of the ridge, but far from it and among the trees, and quite two and a half hours away from the watering-place there.

Amiral then told everybody that we were going home as quickly as we could, for we had no time to spare to make further inquiries about the lost oxen, and on we went. Our first day was three hours, and we purposely overshot the gorge which was our mark, that the Damaras who were on a keen look-out might be convinced that we knew nothing of Kaipanga's

rascality, and were really going home in good earnest. Amiral's men slept a couple of miles away from mine, so as to disarm all notion of a concerted expedition, but at one o'clock in the morning the old scamp got up quietly with about half his men and joined me. I left sufficient people behind to resist any Damaras in case they attacked the camp during my absence, and we were all off under the escort of Amiral's spy at two. It was a very dark night, and we scrambled down the gorge and through the trees of the plain till about four o'clock, when we stopped, as there was some doubt as to where we were, and runners were sent ahead in all directions to explore the country for a mile or two round. Just as the first streaks of light appeared in the sky the wished-for information came; there was no time to be lost, and we all ran in a glorious state of excitement across the country. The light quickly increased, and by the time that the sky was grey we were all behind a mound, watching keenly for some indication of the exact position of the werft, which we were assured was close by us. At length a slender column of smoke was seen, and instantly the charge was ordered. Amiral, Andersson, and myself, with four or five others, were to go straight on; ten men were to make a sweep, and run down upon the werft on the right and ten on the left. Nobody was to fire unless the natives used their assegais. Off they were; our party walked slowly to give the others time, but the dogs of the werft heard us; in an instant the alarm was given, and no time was to be lost, so we in the centre were obliged to make a rush

prematurely; almost every Damara was off helter-skelter. We caught a few women and one man; they said that Kaipanga, the chief, whom we were in search of, was at another werft close by; that he *had* killed the ox and his men had eaten it, and that if we would spare them and not kill them they would show us the way. All this questioning and answering took little more time to say than it does to read, and we were off again, but the daylight had become quite strong, and before we were at the next werft the sun was about to rise. We could not hope to encircle it, so we ran crouching through the bushes on and into it with much better success than we could have expected. The Damaras were not half a minute out of it when we arrived, and were running in all directions. The country was rather open, and there was a mound close by, to the top of which some of our men ran directly. This acted like flying a kite over a moor; it made all the runaway Damaras lie still at once, lest they should be seen, and in this way we gained time to examine their werft for proofs of guilt, and were able to spoor them more leisurely. We found no meat in the huts, but a broken marrow-bone was there. In the main hut was a large piece of ox-hide, half dressed, from which the hairs, as usual, had been removed; we took it out to the light; a few scattered hairs remained, and they were whitish-yellow, which was Timmerman's peculiar colour. A woman who was found in the werft confessed to the skin, and away we went in chase as before. The huts were such wretched affairs that it was not worth while to destroy

them in retaliation for the robbery. We had now some long and severe running; with horses we could have done what we liked, but on foot the naked Damaras were more than a match for us. However, we took two men captive, whose looks almost warranted their being hung without any other proofs of their guilt, and we tied them together and drove them home with several women, whom we kept in different detachments. It was a long time before we were all collected together, as the men were dispersed over the country, and we had no water till ten o'clock, nor did we arrive at the encampment with our prisoners till midday.

After an hour's rest we tried the men, examining them separately. Amiral's shrewdness astonished me beyond measure. He was quite in his element, and wormed out the whole story with the greatest dexterity, and the judicial scene was closed with a business-like application of a new rhinoceros-hide whip.

I had gained quite an insight into Hottentot onslaught by these few hours' experience, and could perfectly understand how engrossing must be the excitement which they yield to savage minds. Compared with these, shooting lions and rhinoceroses must be poor sport to them. The last brings simply into play the faculties of a sportsman, and is an occupation dangerous enough to be disagreeable, but negroes are the woodcocks of Africa, the beau ideal of the game tribe, and they are pursued not with that personal indifference every one must feel towards quadrupeds, but with revenge, hatred, and cupidity. The Hottentot

runs to the raid boiling with passion and hungry for spoils. He is matched with an equal in sight, hearing, speed, and ingenuity; the attack and the pursuit call forth the whole of his intelligence. If the negro has a perfect knowledge of the country on his side to aid his escape, the Hottentot has had time for forethought and preparation in the attack to match that advantage. The struggle is equal until the closing scene when the deadly gun confronts the assegai. Then come the tears and supplication and prayers for mercy, which must be music to the ears of the Hottentot, as he revels in his victory and pauses before he consummates it. I have a pretty fixed idea that if English justice were administered throughout these parts of Africa, a small part only of the population would remain unhung. But we must not be too hard upon the negro and Hottentot morale on that account, for we little know what fearful passions exist in our own European minds until they are thoroughly roused. A young terrier or kitten seems the most harmless and mildest of creatures until he has been brought into contact with rats and learnt the luxury and taste of blood, and many an instance may be found along the distant coasts of this wide world where a year or two has converted the Saxon youth, who left his mother all innocence and trust, into as diabolical and reckless a character as ever stabbed with a bowie-knife.

Two more ride-oxen were now knocked up; they were Buchau and Sweetland. I left them under the care of Saul, near to whose werft we had now arrived,

and whom I paid off. Travelling on we managed to take the remaining oxen to Elephant Fountain, which we reached 22nd of October; we had left 'Tounobis 10th of October; the entire distance between the places is 53 hours, or 146 miles, which gives our pace of travelling as usual, viz. ten and a half miles a day. It is very remarkable how steady the pace of travelling is. I minuted with great care all our journeys from Omanbondè to Ovampo-land, and the whole way from Ovampo-land to 'Tounobis, and thence again to Eikhams, invariably registering the time of every stoppage. The going and returning journeys seldom differed one hour in thirty. Thus, from Okomavaka to 'Tounobis we were twenty-one and a half hours going, and twenty-one and a quarter returning, and so on; but when the hours are reduced into miles, much less accuracy must be expected. I allow two and three-quarter miles an hour, which is near enough to give general ideas of distance; indeed, if a traveller has the geographical positions of the main points of his journey laid down, and also knows how long in actual travelling it will take him to get from one point to another, he is furnished with all the information he can require.

I had by this time reduced my method of travelling over unknown ground to a principle which I will mention here, for want of a better opportunity. When a given direction has to be followed, which is learnt by the pointing of the natives, the compass is of course the guide by day, but it is very important to have one that is not too delicate, or when you rein up to

look at it, so long a time elapses before it settles that the animal becomes fidgetty and disturbs the needle again. By far the best pocket-compass to have, is one that has a glass bottom as well as a glass top to it, like those which are commonly hung up in the cabins of ships, only, of course very much smaller, say one inch across. The pivot on which the needle turns is fixed in a hole drilled through the bottom glass. Concentric with the needle, and turning stiffly round its cap, is a small piece of brass, shaped, say, like a fish, so that its head could never, even by the faintest light, be mistaken for its tail. The top glass of the compass should unscrew.

Before starting, having determined in which direction you intend to proceed, take off the top glass and adjust the head of the fish so that it shall point in that direction; there is now no chance of error or confusion; you forget all about the needle and only think of the fish. When it becomes dark, you have simply to hold up the compass between your eye and the sky, and the fish can be seen quite plainly; but an ordinary compass can never be deciphered after dusk. If any doubt remains, the light of a cigar or a piece of white paper held below the compass will, when you look down upon it, bring out the fish quite clear and distinct. It is much better to hang the compass by three threads, like a scale-pan, than simply to hold it in the hands; the threads take the place of gimbals, and, besides, being more compact in the pocket, are also less likely to get out of order. For a pocket-compass, no great accuracy is required; if the

traveller can depend upon it to a point, that is quite sufficient. Where any bearings for mapping purposes are wanted, nothing inferior to an azimuth compass should be used, and one of these I invariably carried in a case sewn on to my shooting-belt, so as to lie in the small of the back. An almanac should be calculated and written out for the latitudes and longitudes in which the traveller intends to go. A simple approximation to accuracy is all one wants, and the same almanac would do for hundreds of miles; the information required is as to the times of sunrise and set, and of moonrise and set, the bearings of all these; and if the same particulars be given for a few zodiacal stars, it will be found of great use. Again, the times of culmination and the proximate altitude of three or four latitude stars should be stated for every night, and for a given latitude—those stars I mean which come to the meridian soon after dusk, and are of such meridian altitudes as to come within the range of a sextant. Occultations should of course be put down, and, if the traveller has a telescope large enough to observe them, the eclipses of Jupiter's satellites also: one lunar distance to the nearest degree should be copied for every day, in order to check the date; but for longitude purposes recourse must be had to that surpassingly excellent but most cumbrous and ill-bound of English publications, the "Nautical Almanac"—a work printed on blotting-paper, that is spoilt by rain and torn by wind, and which requires as much care in packing and in using as the instruments it is designed to accompany. All

the times made use of should be *apparent* times. The chance is greatly against a traveller's watch going with sufficient accuracy to keep *mean* time. I set mine every sunrise and sunset, keeping another one in reserve, snugly packed up among soft things, to use during lunar and other time observations. In any moderately flat country the error one is liable to, by setting the watch in this way, lies within five minutes, and that is quite accurate enough even for latitude purposes. It is a great satisfaction to have all the particulars about the moonlight in your MS. almanac, for when one travels, it is of much importance; the quickest journeying being done by it. Knowing the bearings of the principal celestial bodies when they are near the horizon, is a great check upon one's course by night; a man soon becomes familiar with these if he has occasion to make use of them. I should strongly urge travellers to provide themselves with alarum watches, or alarums, in some shape or another. Over and over again have we lost our natural rest through fear of oversleeping our time; besides awaking the sleepers, they are of great use in attracting attention when it is time to commence to do anything, such as watching for a star, &c. &c.

It was a great comfort returning to the faithful John and to his pots and saucepans, for we had lived on tough diet since we left him. Immense quantities of animals had been caught in the pitfalls at Elephant Fountain during our absence; they appear to have been migrating in herds, for they are not always found in the same abundance. As my waggon was

light, I bought what little ivory I could from Amiral's people, and took it away with me. I sold it afterwards at St. Helena for about 70*l.* We returned by the way which a few pages back I mentioned as the one that I recommended for waggons to travel upon. We had a little shooting, but not much; at one place we put up eight lions; they were not close together, but within a space about 200 yards across, through which we happened to drive. It was the largest pack I had seen. Fourteen is the largest I have ever heard of. These eight were all full-grown beasts; five of them were females. We had two falls of rain, enough to supply the Quieep River well; indeed, we found a pool with enough water to swim in at the place where we outspanned.

After the first showers the landscape looked charming; the sere leaves of the trees freshened up, and the air was laden with the fragrance of the acacias. For the sportsman, the rain makes a *tabula rasa* of the sand of the country, by obliterating all old tracks and disposing the ground to admit the sharpest and most distinct foot-mark impressions, which it is quite a luxury to follow. It is wonderful how much may be learnt from spoors; a few tracks will tell a long tale. Thus, a short time since, some of Amiral's men came upon the track of a giraffe, grazing, and others of the party upon that of a lion crouching. Of course the spoors were followed. Of a sudden the lion's tracks entirely disappeared, and those of the giraffe showed he was at full gallop; a small slippery place, caused by a slight shower, lay

in his path; by the side of it was an ugly sharp stump, the solid relic of a thorn-tree that had been broken down. In the slippery place the giraffe's feet had slid, and the animal had fallen; on the stump was blood and lion's hair; beyond, on one side of it, were the tracks of the lame marauder, as he limped slowly away; on the other side, those of the giraffe at full gallop. It was therefore evident that the lion had sprung on the back of the giraffe, and was carried by him till he slipped and fell. The fall dislodged the lion, who was flung upon the stump, and was injured too severely to be able to continue the attack. The giraffe seemed not to have been much hurt, as his gallop was a steady one, and there was no blood on his tracks.

The October rains can never be depended on; they seldom supply the country with more than one day's water; they are very partial, and mere showers. These rains do more harm than good to a traveller, for, without materially increasing his supplies of water, they cause the dry grass, which overspreads the ground, to rot, and no food can in many places be obtained for the oxen. The true rainy season does not begin till the end of December; and even then it requires many falls before the arid country is so drenched by rain as to allow the water to lie upon its surface.

As we travelled on, reports reached us of a shocking and fatal accident which had happened to a trader, who had, while lifting up his gun, caused it to go off, and had shot himself through the arm and side.

The accident occurred among Cornelius's tribe, and as they were a very suspicious set, I feared that some foul play might have been the cause of his death; however, Cornelius took great pains in forwarding messengers to me, with full particulars of the case, and I could not hear that any robbery had been committed upon him. The cause of this accident was that of four-fifths of those that occur, namely, the cock being allowed to lie down upon the nipple instead of being kept at half-cock. As the unfortunate man, while sitting in the waggon, drew his gun up to him by the muzzle, it appears that the cock caught against one of the spokes of the wheel, which lifted it a little, so that, when released, it snapped back and the gun went off. Few as the people are who possess percussion-guns in this remote corner of the world, there have been three deaths and one bad accident with them.

For travelling purposes, I do not approve of carrying a gun half-cock, because, in the very careless way that the men persist in holding their fire-arms, the half-cock very frequently becomes full cock without their knowing it, and the cap also is liable to fall off. I think the safest plan with a common gun is to put a piece of thick rag on the cap, and to let the cock down upon it. But I much prefer having a third nick cut in the "tumbler," by which a very low half or quarter cock is produced, the cock just clearing the nipple and securing the cap from being dislodged; many pistols are made in this way. I have adopted this plan for a very long time in my travelling guns,

and confidently recommend it. As to carrying guns on horseback, nobody that I am aware of, except a Hottentot, and occasionally a Dutchman, knows how to do it.

Theirs is a most simple and effectual plan, which, strangely enough, has never been adopted or perhaps even proposed for our mounted troops, and which is incomparably superior in practice to any of the usual plans, with all of which I am pretty well familiar.

Carrying a gun with a belt across the shoulders is objectionable in every way; the gun jogs excessively about, and its weight is wearisome to a degree; the rider has to go through a vast deal of struggling before he can slip it over his head and get it in hand; and, lastly, in case of a fall, it might injure him severely.

The next plan—that of carrying the gun muzzle downwards in a bucket in the position that a sportsman would carry his gun over his arm—is most unsafe; the bullet is perpetually liable to be dislodged, and if dislodged the gun is pretty sure to burst; besides this, a complication of straps are requisite to secure the gun to the belt of the rider, which I find in practice a great inconvenience. Another method is, to sling the gun, which in this case must be a short one, muzzle downward to the back part of the saddle; so that when the rider is on his seat the stock of the gun is behind him, and the muzzle in a bucket below his feet. In this plan, as in the last, the bullet is liable to be dislodged, and also the projecting stock of the gun, over which the leg has to be thrown when

mounting, is excessively in the way of a person who has to do with a restive or frightened horse. There are straps also in this case, which are as troublesome as in the former. Moreover, in all of these there is a jingling and a rattling when the horse trots or canters, which is a very unsportsmanlike sound, although it may be thought by some to be soldierlike and dashing.

Now the Hottentot plan that I recommend I consider perfect: it is to have a case of strong leather (see plate, p. 286) of such a size and shape as to admit the gun-stock a little stiffly; this case, which I will call the "gun-bag," is fastened tightly above to rings or dees in the pommel of the saddle; below, it is altogether unsupported except by a thong, which passes round the saddle-girth and keeps the gun-bag from tilting too far forwards; the gun is pushed stock downwards into the bag, the barrel passes between the right arm and the side, while the muzzle is so entirely clear of the person, that even in taking a drop-leap, that of an ordinarily-sized gun never shifts into a dangerous position. Some time is taken before a person unused to it will find out the best adjustments for both fastenings, as they should be varied according to the rider's seat, but when once determined they have never to be changed. There is no objection whatever to this plan; the hands of the rider are free, and the gun is safe and quite out of the way. It does not cumber him, but he feels it nestling by his side, as an inseparable and faithful companion should do; the cocks are in full sight; a

cover to keep the rain out is most easily put on; in a moment the gun is out of the gun-bag and in the hand, almost as quickly a whip could be raised, and it can be left on the animal's back when the rider dismounts. I do not think the general effect is at all unsightly.

I should not mind riding any reasonable horse across country with a gun carried in this way; indeed it is an invaluable plan to a traveller, for any sized weapon may be put in it; either a little pea-rifle that could be shot off with one hand, as a pistol, or a long heavy two-ounce weapon. A common long shooting gun is perhaps the easiest to carry, though all are easy enough. The other convenient saddle arrangements for a travelling hack, are a bag to hold odds and ends on the left side of the pommel, or where advisable, a holster for a "revolver;" behind the left leg a sabretash, for writing materials may be hung; on the crupper of the saddle there is no harm in having small saddle-bags, and above them a waterproof cape, with leggings, if the season be very rainy, wrapped up in it. With these things, gun, saddle, and all, a man would ride two and a half stone heavier than he walks, which is nothing for a steady travelling expedition; but if he wants to gallop off, shooting, he must of course limit himself to a saddle and gun-bag. No two people travel in the same dress; my own fancy lies in leather trousers, jack-boots, a thick woollen jersey, a cotton shirt over it, and a cap. A belt supplies pocket room.

In foot expeditions, the jack-boots must be replaced

by shoes. In Southern Africa I never could walk barefooted; independently of the thorns, there was something in our state of health which made small wounds difficult to heal, and caused scratches in the foot and hand to fester. Our very Damaras could not travel even with their own sandals, much less could we leave off shoes entirely. I was the more surprised at this, as in previous travelling in North Africa I had become nearly independent of them. I recollect climbing Jebel Barkal, which is a well-known rugged hill, with very sharp stones in it, near the fourth cataract of the Nile, barefooted.

Without shoes and stockings I think I could not even lay my feet to the ground during the hottest time of the year. Once, owing to a mistake, I had dismounted at a small spring of water and turned my ox loose, who rejoined his comrades, and was driven on with them to a more copious watering-place, a couple of miles a-head; I had no stockings on at that time, only shoes. When I started on foot after the party, the heat of the sand was so intense that I positively was but just able to walk, although my skin was pretty well case-hardened. I underwent real suffering in that short distance, but the cool of thick woollen socks, the thickest that English sailors ever wear, was delicious when they were pulled on to my blistered feet.

I do not think that a perfect head-dress has yet been invented by man. A light hunting-cap is very convenient among thick trees, but it cannot be used as a nightcap in the bivouac. As regards colours of

the dress, infinite misunderstanding generally prevails, as may at once be perceived by the colour of the uniform in which our rifle corps are clothed. People have an idea that because shadows are dark, and because people who crouch in ambuscade are generally in shadows, that therefore their clothes should be dark also. They forget that the same shade which deepens the tint of the trees gives at the same time an extra depth to the colour of the man's clothes. As a first approximation to obtaining the best-coloured dress for the purposes of concealment, one would say, let it be of the prevailing hue of the country it is to be used in; so that, if the clothes were dropped on the ground, they would be positively undistinguishable from it at a short distance, whatever blaze of light or depth of shadow fell on it. I am acquainted with no country in the world in which "rifle-green" would answer this requirement. But, going a step further, we find that in no case hardly is the colour of the land one uniform hue, but that a cloth of any one colour, even though it be of the prevailing tint, catches the eye from its mass. It is therefore better that the colour of the dress should not be the same throughout, but irregularly broken, and that too in a manner which does not contrast too strongly with the disposition of the scenery, as for instance, the stripes on a tiger's hide being vertical are far less conspicuous among the upright stems and reeds than if nature had disposed them horizontally. A little experimentalizing will show another curious and very unexpected result, namely, that if the very brightest colours are

used in spots or stripes, or in any other design, but in such proportion that their actual mixture would have produced the sober tint required, then, at rifle distances, unless the pattern be too large, all individuality of the colours will be found to have disappeared, and they will have merged into exactly the same tint that would have been produced had the same colours been mixed together in the same proportion on the pallet. It will also be found that a very large pattern may be used if the margins of the various bands or spots of colour be a little shaded off. In this way we can in a great degree account for the gaudy liveries with which the most skulking of animals are usually dressed. The cat tribe is almost universally decked out with spots or bars. Snakes and lizards are the most brilliant of animals; but all these, if viewed at a distance, or with an eye whose focus is adjusted, not exactly at the animal itself, but to an object more or less distant than it, become apparently of one hue, and lose all their gaudiness. No more conspicuous animal can well be conceived, according to common idea, than a zebra; but on a bright starlight night the breathing of one may be heard close by you, and yet you will be positively unable to see the animal. If the black stripes were more numerous he would be seen as a black mass; if the white, as a white one; but their proportion is such as exactly to match the pale tint which arid ground possesses when seen by moonlight. I therefore protest against the usual notion that people have, as exemplified in the choice of a rifleman's dress. It is infinitely too

dark; and this, in addition to the squareness of the hat, makes an object of him that is particularly calculated to attract attention. It would be, I am sure, hopeless to stalk wary animals in such a costume, unless the character of the country gave most peculiar facilities for doing so. A man who wishes to dress for stalking may indulge his smart fancies to a great extent, but should test every pattern that he selects by viewing its effect at a slight distance, say twenty yards, the main point of all being, that the depth of tint (leaving every consideration of colour aside) should be neither too light nor too dark. I have frequently amused myself by cutting out in paper figures of men, all of the same size and shape, and painting one a rifle-green, and the others bright blue, yellow, and red, in spots or patterns. I have then stuck up these figures against the face of a landscape painting, and retreating ten or twelve yards, the dark green form of the rifleman, place it where I would, remained a prominent unmistakable mass, while the others faded as it were into the foliage, and could not be distinguished from it. It requires a few trials to hit off the proportions of the different colours used to produce a perfect result. I may add, in case the reader might wish to experimentalise, that it saves much running backwards and forwards in doing it to place a looking-glass some distance in front, and, as the painting goes on, to hold the sketch up from time to time and observe the effect in the distant reflection.

To return from this long digression to my narrative.

On the 1st of November, the eighth day after leaving

Elephant Fountain, we heard a report about Hans, which, though untrue, alarmed me exceedingly; it was to the effect that he had shot himself, and that the waggons lay on this side of Eikhams. I was so anxious, that I pushed the oxen through the night, and with but little intermission we were again on the road in the morning; we there found Damaras, who, to my great relief, assured me that he was alive and well, and I therefore left the waggon oxen with the men, to have drink and food, and started on first, and walked till I had the pleasure of seeing Hans again, who, after all, had had no accident whatever; he had every thing in perfect order, and, as usual, had to show me some result of careful thrift and hard work.

The sense of oxen is wonderful; the two sets, mine and his, that had been separated nearly three months, knew each other again perfectly, and passed the night together in the most amicable way, instead of fighting and knocking their horns together as new acquaintances always do on their first introduction to each other's society. I was badly off for small cattle; of the forty goats that I had bought from Jonker, hardly one was alive; they had all died of a distemper one after the other. Hans gave me a terrible account of the state of the roads south; he said that literally there was no grass whatever for great distances together. In coming up to meet me, the oxen that he had were knocked up entirely, and he had to send first to Jonker's and then to Mr. Hahn's, a journey of many days, for assistance. My oxen were fresh enough, for they had had a long

rest at Elephant Fountain, and plenty of grass, so I had but little fear of getting on to the Bay, especially as the road thither is entirely down hill.

November 5th.—I arrived at Jonker's, and had long conversations with him, and we parted excellent friends. There seemed a reasonable hope that a more peaceful state of things was now entered upon, although I had failed in obtaining from Cornelius that compensation for the cattle he had stolen from the Damaras, which I had desired.

My plans about my personal effects were now arranged. Andersson kept half, and with the other half I made part payment to Hans of the debt for wages and cattle that I owed him. I took this opportunity to sell one waggon to Jonker for forty oxen, and to buy others besides. Phlebus was dismissed, that he might return home to Rehoboth. As Barmen was to be the head-quarters of Andersson and of Hans also, after I had left the country, we took on Jonker's waggon by ourselves to that place, and there all its contents were placed in store. Wishing the Missionaries a final farewell, I travelled on to Otjimbinguè with the large waggon, whose axletree had been replaced at Okamabuti, but had recently, in jolting over a stone, split lengthways; I therefore made ready to leave it behind, if necessary, and push on with ride-oxen; in fact, I had no time to spare, for the animals were fast knocking up from hunger; however, by blacksmithing and carpentering as well as we could, the waggon was made strong enough to travel on with us.

We passed rapidly through Otjimbinguè, for there was no grass there, and on the 21st of November reached Tsobis. Now I felt safe; happen what might, I could reach the Bay in time to save the ship. The oxen were very thin and weak, but there were plenty of reeds in the Swakop for them to eat. As we moved down the Tsobis River, by the place where the first giraffe was shot, some natives warned us of the next watering-holes at the mouth of the river, for the Ghou Damup had poisoned the water to kill the buffaloes that then were there. We had arrived at the Swakop before we were aware of it; the oxen rushed, as they often do, wildly to the watering-holes, and though we drove them away before any one had drunk enough to hurt them seriously, yet one dog was very nearly killed. He rolled about in agonies from the poison. The oxen became still weaker, the change of food from dry grass to reeds quite upset them, so that we had to rest the following day.

November 24th.—We could just move on through the sand with hard struggling, and the next day we arrived at a place where old Piet was encamped, and were luxuriously treated with milk. We slept at Annāas on the 27th, at Davieep on the 28th; there was not a relic to be found of my poor horse and mule that the lions had eaten there. We now travelled principally by night. From Davieep we arrived safely at Oosop, after rather a hazardous jolting which the waggon underwent in going down a steep bank, and we were then only one day's journey from the Bay. Andersson rode directly across the

plain to Scheppmansdorf, to make inquiries after news and to rearrange some of the packages. He was to send back word to me immediately on his arrival. There was plenty of grass at Oosop, and I stayed there two days, and then went on to Hycomkap, where Andersson's messenger reached me, saying that the ship had not arrived.

As we had slept at Oosop on the 29th, we could, if I had chosen, have reached the Bay on the 30th. We left 'Tounobis October 10th, so that the entire journey would have taken us fifty-three days; but, had the country been in a good state for travelling, I am sure that I could have done it in ten days less, or forty-three days. I had calculated on thirty-seven days' actual travel, and four of rest, or forty-one days. With a change of oxen at Eikhams or Elephant Fountain, I think Lake 'Ngami ought to be reached in fifty days from Walfisch Bay, and with a change at Otjimbinguè and again at Elephant Fountain, a light well-driven waggon might do it in forty days.

At Hycomkap we had some pretty foot-chases after gemsbok calves, and killed a few. The whole number of oxen in the drove were now 133. Jonker had still some to pay, when he received the mules.

December 4th.—We left Hycomkap in the afternoon for the Bay, and walked the whole night through and the following morning besides, with only half an hour's intermission. The cool sea breeze fanned our faces about eight o'clock, and to my intense delight I saw in the distance two vessels at anchor in Walfisch Bay. We arrived there at ten in the forenoon, not

a bit tired, but highly excited. The vessels were whalers; all the Scheppmansdorf party were on the beach, and seeing and talking to so many people seemed quite another world to me, after my long and almost solitary ramble. These whalers were the very first vessels, excepting one, which had touched at the Bay since my arrival in the country. I now put the store-house into habitable order, and settled down, awaiting the arrival of the ship I expected, which was to bring me all my letters, my clothes, and everything that I had left behind me at Cape Town.

Days passed, the cold was bitter, and I passed most of the daytime rolled up in my caross. The wind whistled through every cranny, and though the sun was vertical at noon, yet its rays never seemed to touch us. I employed myself fishing with a seine-net, doing a little whale fishery in the bay, and in trying to harpoon small sharks out of my mackintosh pontoon; one gave me a capsize. I shot and captured one, and slew but lost three others; at least, though *habitués* of the place, they never reappeared. I rode one day with Andersson to Scheppmansdorf, when we saw a brood of young ostriches, each about a foot high, with their parents, and gave chase. The creatures could run very nearly as fast as we, and had quite as good a wind, so, having a long start, they gave us a severe chase before we came up to them, when we slew six. Returning from Scheppmansdorf I drove the three miles in a cart that Mr. Bam had made himself, and as we were cantering over the plain

I again saw the ostriches, and went after them in my chariot. I soon came up with them, and, jumping out, captured six more.

Christmas and New Year's Day had passed, when, early in January, 1852, as the morning haze cleared away, the sails of a schooner loomed large before us; in a moment I was in my pontoon and paddled out to her, jumped on board, and received my letters of a year and nine months' interval. They were not indeed unchequered by melancholy news; but for the intelligence they conveyed of my own family circle I had every reason to be grateful. Thus closed my anxieties and doubts. I had much indeed to be thankful for. I had not lost one of my many men either through violence or through sickness in the long and harassing journey I had made. It was undertaken with servants who, at starting, were anything but qualified for their work, who grumbled, held back, and even mutinied, and over whom I had none other than a moral control. I had to break in the very cattle that were to carry me, and to drill into my service a worthless set of natives, speaking an unknown tongue. The country was suffering from all the atrocities of savage war when I arrived, and this state of things I had to put an end to before I could proceed. All this being accomplished, I found myself without any food to depend upon, except the oxen that I drove with me, which might, on any evening, decamp or be swept off in a night attack by the thieving and murderous Damaras. That all this was gone through successfully, I am in the highest degree indebted both to

Andersson and to Hans, for single-handed, I hardly know what I should have done.

On the 16th of January I said my last adieu, and in company with Timboo, John Williams, and John Morta, sailed away to St. Helena. The rest remained in the country. Hans intended to make a venture in cattle and ivory, and Andersson to investigate the natural history of the lake district. Of the natural history of Damara-land he had made a complete collection, but the barrenness of the country admitted of no great scope to the naturalist. The flowers were very few and wretched-looking. I really only know one that would look presentable in an English garden. What few seeds I brought from Ovampo-land are now planted in the gardens at Kew. My Ovampo fowls survived a stormy passage homewards, and laid eggs constantly, until they came to English latitudes, and then they all died; and my faithful cur, Dinah, is the only living animal of the expedition, besides myself, that fate has as yet allowed to revisit Europe.

THE END.

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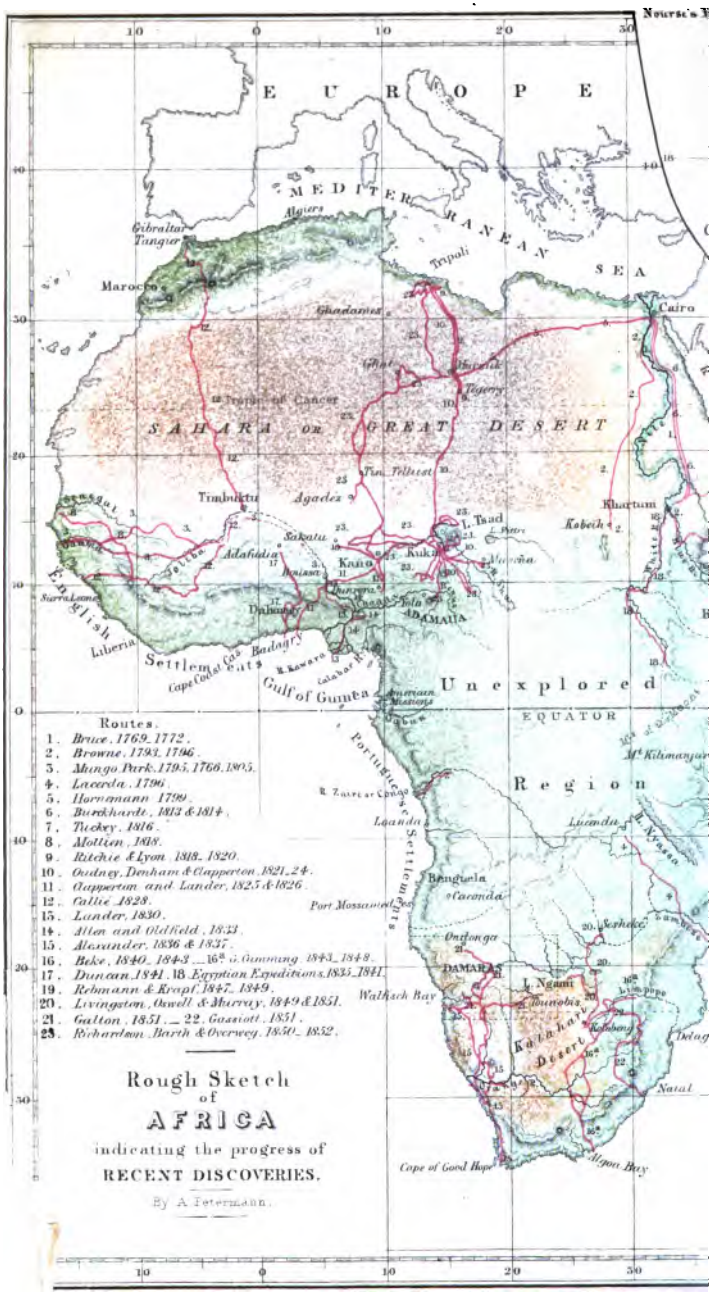

Routes.

1. Bruce, 1769–1772.
2. Browne, 1793, 1796.
3. Mungo Park, 1795, 1796, 1805.
4. Lacerda, 1796.
5. Hornemann 1799.
6. Burckhardt, 1813 & 1814.
7. Tuckey, 1816.
8. Mollien, 1818.
9. Ritchie & Lyon 1818–1820.
10. Oudney, Denham & Clapperton 1821–24.
11. Clapperton and Lander, 1825 & 1826.
12. Caillé 1828.
15. Lander, 1830.
14. Allen and Oldfield, 1833.
15. Alexander, 1836 & 1837.
16. Beke, 1840–1843 — 16a. Cumming 1843–1848.
17. Duncan 1841. 18. Egyptian Expeditions 1835–1841.
19. Rebmann & Krapf, 1847–1849.
20. Livingston, Oswell & Murray, 1849 & 1851.
21. Galton, 1851 — 22. Gassiott, 1851.
23. Richardson, Barth & Overweg, 1850–1852.

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